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# HISTORY

OF THE

# OLD SOUTH CHURCH

OF BOSTON.

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“Words pass as wind ; but where great deeds were done,  
The power abides, transfused from sire to son.” — LOWELL.

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## PREFACE.

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THIS little sketch claims simply to be a compilation. It has been written to supply an immediate need, and has drawn its material from many sources. Dr. Wisner's sermons and Gen. Quincy's eloquent speech before the Massachusetts legislature have furnished the early history; and the events of Revolutionary interest have been drawn chiefly from the papers of the day or the lives of the prominent actors.

At some future time a larger volume will be issued, suitably prepared and copiously illustrated, which shall be more worthy of the subject of which it treats.

November, 1876.



# THE HISTORY

## OF THE

# OLD SOUTH CHURCH.

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### FOUNDATION AND EARLY HISTORY.

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FEW spots in this New World of ours are rendered venerable by so long a line of associations as is the Old South Church.

The very land upon which it stands was the dwelling-place of Gov. Winthrop, the scene of the earliest struggles of the colony upon this barren coast. Here in the Old South Church has Thatcher preached and Dudley worshipped; here Franklin was baptized; and here, in later days, the eloquence of Adams, of Quincy, and of Warren, kindled the flame which fired the Revolution. Within its walls were won our earliest victories. Before its voice the proudest emissaries of the British crown wavered and trembled. At its word Massachusetts men were delivered from impress, and the haughty commander of his majesty's man-of-war yielded in awed submission. Governor and military bowed alike before the mandates from the Old South Church; and at its command King George's troops retreated from Boston soil. Its very name became a watchword, a cry of peril, and a war-blast of defiance.

From the family of Gov. Winthrop the estate passed into the hands of the revered John Norton, a preacher dearly loved and highly honored throughout the province, and from

him to the Mary Norton whose name has become so familiar to our ears.

It was a time of much excitement in the religious world of Boston; and the "religious world," in those days, was very different from what it is in ours. Free will was the favorite topic of society, and the "Subjects of Baptism" a rock of dissension which estranged the nearest friends. Church and State were as intimately connected as ever in Spain or Italy. No man was a citizen in Massachusetts unless he was likewise a church-member. A large class of the community thus found itself disfranchised, and incapable of holding any office, although subject to taxation, impress, and all other public burdens. Since no man could become a church-member except through the gates of baptism, it became a very serious question *who* should be held entitled to that rite. Churches differed greatly in their regulations, especially as to the admission of the children of church-members without any personal experience of religion; and the First Church in Boston exacted the full letter of the ancient law. The more liberal spirits of the parish rebelled; and, in 1669, this dissenting minority seceded from the church whose tenets they disapproved.

Mary Norton, widow of the former pastor, was of the number; and, in the following April, she deeded to the use of the new society a portion of her garden, on which to place a meeting-house for the preaching of a broader faith.

Great was the indignation of their comrades at the outset; and the seceders were even refused those letters of dismission necessary to enable them to become members of another church. A council was even called together lest "a sudden tumult should arise." The ground for this fear was publicly proclaimed. "Some persons," it was declared, "were attempting to set up an edifice for public worship which was apprehended by the authorities to be detrimental to the public peace." The council, however, saw no cause for serious alarm, and the meeting-house on Madam Norton's garden was suffered to proceed. From its situation, it was known

as the South Church, until, in 1717, on the erection of the New South on Summer Street, it received its present name.

Fourteen years elapsed before the mother church forgave her wandering children; but, in 1682, aggressions from abroad called for united defence. In face of the proposal that ministers from England should be brought over and supported by contributions from congregations here, there seemed need for union in the Puritan ranks. Therefore, at a meeting of the First Church, it was agreed that a proposal to "forget and forgive all past offences" should be sent to the upstart congregation, and that "thenceforward the two societies should live together in peace." The Third Church gladly acceded, and both societies kept a solemn day together, when, lamenting their former contentions, they gave thanks to the great Peacemaker for effecting this joyful reconciliation. The union was none too soon; for, in 1685, the charter of the colony was repealed, and the very next day a clergyman of the Church of England petitioned for the use of one of the Congregational meeting-houses. This request was refused, and he was granted the east end of the Town House until those who desired his ministrations should furnish him with better accommodations. But in December following arrived Sir Edmund Andros, the most tyrannical ruler ever sent from England to oppress the colonies. One of his first acts was to intimate to the ministers of the town, that he and his retinue desired the use of one of the churches, for the English services. When the ministers replied that they could not conscientiously accede to his demand; he sent for the keys of the South Meeting-house. They were refused; and a deputation of the society waited upon his excellency to remonstrate. Two days later, being Good Friday, he sent a peremptory command to the sexton, "Goodman Needham," to open the doors and ring the bell; and Needham was frightened into compliance. The service for the day was held according to the rites of the Church of England; and, on the next Sunday, the governor and his suite

again took possession, notifying the pastor that he and his congregation might come at half past one. At that time the society assembled, but were kept standing for an hour in the street. After this, the governor and his retinue used the church whenever it suited his excellency's convenience, arbitrarily changing their hours, to the great annoyance of the congregation.

In 1711, the South Church had an opportunity to prove the sincerity of its reconciliation with its mother church; for in that year occurred one of the great fires of Boston, and the meeting-house of the First Church was destroyed. The South Church not only unanimously offered its building for the use of both congregations, but also proposed that service should be performed half the time by the ministers of the First Church, who should receive from the deacons of the South Church the same weekly allowance that was granted to their own pastor.

In 1727, the congregation had so greatly increased that it was necessary to enlarge or to rebuild the meeting-house; and after much discussion it was decided to rebuild.

So serious was the step considered, that, before the demolition of the ancient edifice, a day of fasting and prayer was observed by the entire congregation. On the Sunday following, farewell sermons were preached before crowded assemblies; and on Monday the clergyman, Mr. Sewall, prayed with the workmen as they began taking down the church.

The new building was completed in April, 1730, and is the edifice so well known to-day. From its pulpit, on the twenty-sixth, Mr. Sewall gave forth the prophetic text, —

“AND THE GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN THE GLORY OF THE FORMER, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.”

The worthy preacher spoke more truly than he knew, when thus he consecrated the walls which, in the coming

generation, were to be honored above all other churches, and crowned as the "Sanctuary of Freedom."

Richly indeed did she deserve the title. In the struggles which preceded the Revolution, this church became the scene of all those great uprisings which ended in our Independence. When Boston proudly claims the honor of being the birthplace of the Revolution, she will remember always how it was fostered in the Old South Church, whose history is indeed the very history of Boston.



## THE OLD SOUTH PROHIBITS THE IMPRESS OF MASSACHUSETTS CITIZENS.

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AT all times of great excitement, when the concourse became too great for Faneuil Hall, the people adjourned to the Old South Meeting-house; and hence it became the scene of all the most animated of those town-meetings which were the abomination of the British. Very stormy indeed were these meetings, and so widespread was their fame, that Burke, to image a most unusual tumult in the English Parliament, declares it was "*as hot as Faneuil Hall or the Old South Church in Boston.*"

The first of these many meetings which has left its record, was in the early summer of '68. Ever since the accession of George III., eight years before, resistance had been ripening in the colonies. The Writs of Assistance and the Stamp Act had resulted in the triumph of their opponents; but one oppressive measure had been repealed, only to give place to the same pretensions, disguised under a different dress. Now, for the first time, armed force had been resorted to. General Gage was ordered to station a regiment permanently in Boston, and vessels of war were sent to occupy the harbor. In accordance with these measures, the "Romney," a ship of fifty guns, sailed into Boston Bay. Scarcely had she cast anchor, when several of her men deserted. The commander, Capt. Corner, impressed New-England seamen to fill their places. Great was the indignation aroused by such proceedings; and the excitement was not diminished by the news, that, on his way from Halifax, he had already seized several sailors from colonial merchantmen at sea. The captain was immediately visited



by a deputation of the citizens; but no redress being obtained, one of the captives was rescued. Although the offer of a substitute was made, the captain stormed with anger against the town. "No man," he said, "shall go out of this vessel. The town is a blackguard town, ruled by mobs. They have begun with me by rescuing a man whom I pressed this morning; and, by the Eternal God, I will make their hearts ache before I leave!"

Next day, a placard was posted about the town, calling on the Sons of Liberty to assemble at Liberty Hall, a name given to the space around the Liberty Tree. The day proved rainy; yet so many people flocked into Boston from the neighboring towns, that there was a larger assemblage than had ever yet been seen in town. The recent seizure of Hancock's sloop, the "Liberty," had enraged the people to the utmost; and both the name of the vessel and the popularity of her owner added fuel to the flames. Only the expectation of this meeting had kept the town in peace during the preceding night. As the call had been informal, and doubts were expressed whether this could be held as a legal town-meeting, it was resolved to adjourn till three o'clock in the afternoon; and, accordingly, the selectmen issued the accustomed warrants. Meantime, the governor, at his country-seat in Jamaica Plain, received such startling tidings from his friends of the doings of the Sons of Liberty, that he sent one of his own sons into town to summon the lieutenant-governor, Hutchinson, in the expectation that the news might be such as to oblige him to withdraw to the castle.

Faneuil Hall, at three o'clock, proved far too small to contain the people who assembled, and the meeting adjourned to the Old South Church. James Otis was chosen moderator. Since his argument against the Writs of Assistance, he had been the popular idol; and he was received with loud applause.

Otis addressed the people, strongly recommending the preservation of order, and expressing the hope that their

grievances might in time be redressed. "If not," he continued, "and we are called to defend our liberties, I trust we shall resist, even unto blood."

Such was the first bold presage which rang through the Old South Church.

The following petition was drawn up, and submitted to the meeting:—

PROVINCE OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY.

*To His Excellency FRANCIS BERNARD, Esq., Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over said Province, and Vice-Admiral of same.*

The Inhabitants of the Town of BOSTON, in Town Meeting legally assembled,

*Humbly shew:—*

That your Petitioners consider the British Constitution as the basis of their safety and happiness. By that, is established, no man shall be governed by laws, nor taxed, but by himself, or representative legally and fairly chosen, and to which he does not give his own consent. In open violation of these rights of Britons, laws and taxes are imposed on us, to which we only have not given our consent, but against which we have most firmly remonstrated. Dutiful petitions have been preferred to our most gracious Sovereign, which (tho', to the great consternation of the people, we now learn have been cruelly and insidiously prevented reaching the Royal Presence) we have waited to receive a gracious answer to, with the greatest attention to public peace, until we find ourselves invaded with an armed force, seizing, impressing, and imprisoning the persons of our fellow-subjects, contrary to express Acts of Parliament.

Menaces have been thrown out, fit only for Barbarians, which already affect us in the most sensible manner, and threaten us with famine and desolation, as all navigation is obstructed, upon which alone our whole support depends; and the town is at this crisis in a situation nearly such as if war was formally declared against us.

To contend with our parent state is, in our idea, the most shocking and dreadful extremity; but tamely to relinquish the only security we and our posterity retain of the enjoyment of our lives and properties without one struggle, is so humiliating and base, that we cannot support the reflection. We apprehend, Sir, that it is at your option, in your power, and, we would hope, in your inclination, to prevent this distressed and justly incensed people from effecting too much, and from the shame and reproach of attempting too little.

As the Board of Customs have tho't fit, of their own motion, to relinquish the exercise of their commission here, and, as we cannot but

hope that, being convinced of the impropriety and injustice of the appointment of a Board with such enormous powers, and the inevitable destruction which would ensue from the exercise of their office, will never reassume it, we flatter ourselves that your Excellency will, in tenderness to this people, use the best means in your power to remove the other grievance we so justly complain of, and issue your immediate order to the commander of His Majesty's ship "Romney," to remove from this harbour till we shall be ascertained of the success of our applications.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, &c.

A committee was now appointed, consisting of John Rowe, Hancock, and Warren, to ascertain when the governor would receive the petition; and, on their reporting that he was at his country-seat, a committee of twenty-one, headed by Samuel Adams, were directed to wait on him immediately. Resolutions were also passed, expressing the general feeling that was excited by the removal of the "Liberty" from Hancock's Wharf, and characterizing the ill consequences that would follow the introduction of the troops into Boston. Otis, in adjourning the meeting until the next day, earnestly enjoined an adherence to peace and order.

That afternoon, over Boston Neck, set out a train of eleven chaises, single file, in slow procession, and drew up before his excellency's door. The reports of the morning's transactions, that had been carried to the governor at Jamaica Plain, had strengthened his opinion that an insurrection was at hand; and, as he was awaiting in the afternoon the arrival of Hutchinson, he must have been surprised to see upon the road moving towards his house, not a noisy populace, pell-mell, flourishing pikes and liberty-caps, but a train of eleven chaises, from which alighted at his door the respectable committee from the Old South, among whom were even several of his own council. "I received them," Bernard says, "with all possible civility; and having heard their petition, I talked very freely with them, but postponed giving a formal answer till the next day, as it should be in writing. I then had wine handed round; and they left me highly

pleased with their reception, *especially that part of them which had not been used to an interview with me.*" Those more accustomed to his excellency's power of dissimulation were doubtless somewhat prepared for his refusal next morning to withdraw the "Romney" from the harbor. So impressed was Capt. Corner, however, by the deliberate voice of a determined people, expressed in so orderly a manner, that he gave public notice that he would not impress "any man belonging to Massachusetts, or married in the Province, nor any employed in trading along the shore or to the neighboring colonies."

This, at least, was a decided concession to the enterprise and determination of a *Boston town-meeting*.

## THE BOSTON MASSACRE.

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THE occasion oftenest celebrated in the Old South Church, whose annual commemoration contributed so much to kindle the people of the town against their oppressors, was the famous *Boston Massacre*. Familiar as is the name to every American ear, few even of the Bostonians are equally familiar with the transaction; and, since its commemoration became so inseparably interwoven with the history of the Old South Church, it seems of interest in this little sketch to give such particulars of the fray as may add vividness to future pictures.

The 22d of February, 1770, was kept with no such rejoicings as greet our ears to-day. The city was in mourning. The first martyr in the cause of liberty had fallen. Christopher Snider, a boy of only eleven, had been shot by an enraged informer, goaded on to the act by the revilings which followed his attempt to destroy a figure-head erected by the people. The "informer" retreated into his house, whence he fired on the crowd; and little Christopher was the victim.

All "Friends of Liberty" were invited to attend the funeral. "Young as he was, he died for his country," was the declaration, "by the hand of one directed by others who could not bear to see the enemies of America made the ridicule of boys." On Monday, the twenty-sixth, his funeral took place. The little corpse was set down under the Tree of Liberty, from which the procession set forth. Four or five hundred schoolboys walked before the coffin, the relations followed, and after them thirteen hundred of the inhabitants



on foot. A more imposing spectacle could scarcely have been devised, or one better adapted to produce a lasting impression on the hearts of the spectators. The morning papers of the fifth of March, which told of the occasion, gave also several accounts of quarrels between the inhabitants and the soldiery.

There had been a fall of snow during the day ; but as night approached, the sky was clear, and the moon, in its first quarter, lighted the frosted streets. Many people were abroad in clusters, as though expecting some unusual event. Parties of soldiers were passing through the streets, — an unusual thing at that hour, when they ought to have been confined to the barracks. As they hurried along, some of them struck the inhabitants indiscriminately with their sheathed cutlasses, and seemed anxious to provoke an affray. There were, at this time, two regiments in Boston, — the Fourteenth (quartered in Brattle Street) and the Twenty-ninth (in Water Street).

A sentinel had been stationed in Boylston Alley, which led into Market Street from Murray's Barracks, where the Fourteenth were quartered. Three or four young men, desiring to go through this passage about nine o'clock, observed the sentinel brandishing his sword against the wall and striking fire for his own amusement. They offered to pass him, and were challenged, but persisted in their attempt ; and one of them received a slight wound on the head. The bustle of this rencounter drew together all those who were passing by, and fifteen or twenty people thronged the alley ; and thirty or forty more, gathered in Dock Square, were attempting to force their way to the barracks through Brattle Street, which was, at that time, so narrow that a carriage could with difficulty pass. Several soldiers ran down Boylston Alley, assailing spectators in the doorways, and threatening their lives. The bystanders ran to the Old Brick Meeting-house, which stood near the head of State Street, and lifted a boy into the window to ring the bell. People came rushing to the scene, many of them calling " Fire ! "

and carrying buckets, expecting a serious conflagration. Ensign Mall, at the gate of the barrack yard, urged the soldiers forward. "Turn out," he cried, "I will stand by you! Kill them! Stick them! Knock them down! Run your bayonets through them!" One soldier, kneeling down, aimed his musket, and was only prevented from firing by a lieutenant standing near, who interfered, and pushed him to the barracks. "Where are the damned cowards? Where are your Liberty Boys?" was the cry. "Where are they? Cut them to pieces!" These and other such exclamations roused the towns-people to desperation.

A barber's apprentice, observing Capt. Goldfinch crossing, called out, "There goes a fellow who has not paid my master's bill!" The sentinel at the Custom House left his place, crying, "Show your face!" — "I am not ashamed to show my face to any man," answered the boy; and the soldier gave him a sweeping blow with his musket.

"Do you intend to murder people?" exclaimed a bystander. "Yes, by God, root and branch!" shouted a soldier, sealing his oath with a blow. Incensed by such threats, the people gathered together threateningly in Dock Square. Suddenly there appeared among them a tall man with a white wig and a scarlet cloak, to whom all lent the most devout attention. Who the stranger may have been is still a mystery. His very words are unrecorded. We only know, that, after listening to him for some moments, the crowd gave three cheers and huzzaed for "the main guard." The main guard were stationed near the head of State Street, directly opposite the door on the south side of the Town House, where its location had long been very galling to the people. To this place all the soldiers detached for duty were brought daily, and from thence marched to the particular posts assigned them. On this day the command of the guard had devolved upon Capt. Preston and Lieut. Bassett.

The citizens who, running from Dock Square, passed through Royal Exchange Lane, found a single sentinel

stationed before the Custom House, which was on the spot now occupied by the Union Bank, and made one corner of the Lane, as the Royal Exchange Tavern did the other. As the crowd ran towards the sentinel, he retreated to the steps of the house, and alarmed the inmates by three or four powerful knocks at the door. Word was sent to Lieut. Bassett, that the sentinel was attacked by the towns-people. He immediately sent a message to his captain, who instantly repaired to the guard-house, where Lieut. Bassett informed him that he had just sent a sergeant and six men to assist the sentry at the Custom House. "I will follow them," said the captain, "and see they do no mischief." He overtook them before they reached the Custom House, where they joined the sentinel, and formed a half-circle round the steps. By this time the bell from the Old Brick Church had aroused the people, who flocked from all quarters in answer to the summons. The soldiers were soon surrounded. Many of those nearest them were armed with clubs, and crowded close upon them. Those at a distance began to throw sticks of wood, snowballs, and ice, at them; while from all sides they were challenged, "Fire! fire, if you dare!" At last they thought they heard the order given; and they did fire, in succession from left to right. Two or three of the guns flashed, but the rest were fatal. Crispus Attucks a mulatto, and two others were killed upon the spot: three more were mortally wounded, and several seriously wounded. Those who suffered were for the most part persons passing by chance, or quiet spectators of the scene. Instantly the alarum was sounded. The town drums beat, and the bells in the churches rang. "The soldiers are rising! To arms! to arms!" was the cry. "Turn out with your guns! Town-born, turn out!"

Two years later, Warren, in the Old South Church, speaking to men who themselves had witnessed the scene, and who now thronged together to commemorate its horrors, recalled the desperation of that night. "Language," he said, "is too feeble to paint the emotion of our souls when our



streets were stained with the blood of our brethren ; when our ears were wounded with the groans of the dying, and our eyes were tormented with the sight of the mangled bodies of the dead. Our hearts beat to arms : we snatched our weapons, almost resolved, by one decisive stroke, to avenge the deaths of our slaughtered brethren."

Startled by the clang of bells and beat of drums, the inhabitants flocked around from every side. Artisans from the ship-yards, shopmen, gentlemen, sailors, men of all classes and avocations, goaded to madness, ran through the frozen streets, ready and eager for the conflict. But the character of Boston vindicated itself, even in that awful hour. "Propitious Heaven," continues Warren, "forbade the bloody carnage." Patriots stood firm and self-possessed, and still turned for justice to the law, before adopting sterner measures. The lieutenant-governor was called to quell the surging crowd. He appeared at the window of the council-chamber, and besought the assembled multitude to hear him speak. As soon as silence was obtained, he called upon the people to disperse, promising to inquire into the affair in the morning, and that the law should take its course.

He was requested to order the troops back to the barracks, but replied that it was not in his power, as he had no command over the regiments. Such an assurance from the chief magistrate of a city, in time of peace, was scarcely reassuring. A gentleman asked him to look out of the window facing the main guard, and see the position of the soldiers. After a good deal of persuasion, his honor did so, and saw that the troops were drawn up, apparently ready to fire on the people. He then desired Col. Carr to send the troops to their barracks in the same order they were in ; and, soon after, they shouldered their arms, and were marched to the guard-room and barracks. Pacified for the time by the confinement of the soldiers, and the assurances of Hutchinson that instant inquiries should be made by the county magistrate, the body of the people retired, leaving about a

hundred to keep watch over the examination, which lasted until three o'clock. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Preston; and the soldiers concerned in the firing were committed to prison.

Early the next morning, the selectmen and justices of the county waited upon Hutchinson in the council-chamber. They assured him that nothing would satisfy them but the positive orders that the troops should be removed from the town. As on the night before, Hutchinson protested that he had no command over the troops, but offered to send for Colonels Carr and Dalrymple, and advise with them in council.

Meanwhile the people, at eleven o'clock, had assembled at Faneuil Hall. A messenger was despatched to the council-chamber to desire the attendance of the selectmen, who were still awaiting an answer from the lieutenant-governor. On their arrival, a formal committee of fifteen was appointed, to inform his honor the lieutenant-governor, that it was the unanimous opinion of the meeting, that the inhabitants and soldiery could no longer dwell together in safety, and that bloodshed could only be averted by the instant removal of the troops. Headed by Samuel Adams, this committee immediately proceeded to the council-chamber, and laid the demand before his excellency. Hutchinson requested a parley, but in vain. He reminded them that an attack on the king's troops was treason, and involved a forfeiture of the lives and estates of all concerned. The committee simply reiterated their demand, and withdrew into an adjoining room. After some discussion with the council and Dalrymple, the governor reported that he regretted the "unhappy differences which had arisen, but that, as the commanding officers of the troops received their orders from New York, it was not in his power to countermand those orders. Nevertheless, Col. Dalrymple had offered to remove to the castle the Twenty-ninth regiment, which had been especially concerned in the late affray, until orders could be received from the general for both regiments. The

commanding officer had also promised that the main guard should be removed, and the Fourteenth regiment be placed under restraint.

At three o'clock the people assembled in the Old South Meeting-house, to receive the report of their committee. All day long the throng had been pouring into the town across the neck, and even the Old South itself could not contain the multitude. The building was packed to overflowing, every door was blocked, and the surging crowd filled the street, even back to the Old State House.

At last, from the council-chamber, came forth the committee, led by Samuel Adams, his head bared in reverence to the solemnity of the occasion, and his gray locks floating in the wind. "Make way for the committee!" was the cry, and the masses parted on either side, to give them room. None but the committee knew the purport of the answer; and on that answer hung the issues of peace or war. The public indignation, so long held in check, was ready to burst forth in one wild tumult of revenge, a revenge which soldiers and citizens alike knew was within the power of the populous and determined province. On reaching the church, the committee were ushered into the presence of a densely-packed audience, filling the body of the edifice, and crowding into all the galleries. To that earnest assemblage, Adams read the response of the lieutenant-governor. A moment's silence followed; and then the question was put by the chairman, "Is the answer satisfactory?" An instantaneous "No!" was thundered forth, with an emphasis which made the rafters of the old meeting-house tremble with the peal. One solitary voice responded, "Ay;" and the circumstance was recorded by the town-clerk, that there was "one dissentient."

Still the order-loving town determined on one last appeal to avert the threatening tempest. Samuel Adams and his committee were sent to make a "final demand" for the total evacuation of the town.

It was late in the afternoon, and darkness was coming

on. The council-chamber presented a memorable scene, such as that generation of Americans had never witnessed. Boston was then the centre of population and wealth, and all the formality and majesty of government were there exhibited. The full pageant of the royal authority, civic and military, was now displayed. There sat the lieutenant-governor, his majesty's representative, at the head of the council-table; beside him, Col. Dalrymple, commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, Col. Carr, the commander of the war-ship "Rose," and eight and twenty councillors all in their long white wigs and scarlet robes. Before these illustrious personages appeared Samuel Adams, ambassador from the great assembly in the Old South Church.

In the name of the town of Boston, Adams addressed the lieutenant-governor. He represented the state of the town and of the country, the dangerous, ruinous, and fatal effects of standing armies in populous cities in time of peace, and the determined resolution of the public that the troops should be withdrawn from the town. "It is the unanimous opinion of the meeting," continued Adams, "that the reply to the vote of the inhabitants in the morning is by no means satisfactory: nothing less will satisfy them than a total and immediate removal of the troops. Hutchinson repeated his former statement that one of the two regiments (the Twenty-ninth) should be removed, adding, as before, that the troops were not subject to his authority, and he had no power to remove them. The mighty spirit of the Revolution then arose in the countenance of the "great incendiary." Drawing himself to his full height, and with a dangerous flash in his clear, blue eye, he stretched forth his arm, "which slightly shook with the energy of his soul," and gazing steadfastly at the lieutenant-governor, he replied, "If you have power to remove *one* regiment, you have power to remove both. It is at your peril, if you refuse. The meeting is composed of three thousand people. They are become impatient. A thousand men are already arrived from the neighborhood, and the whole country is in motion.

Night is approaching. An immediate answer is expected. *Both regiments or none !*"

The whole assemblage stood abashed before the patriot. No subterfuge could evade the crisis. The issue was presented, and a direct answer was demanded.

The irresolute chief magistrate applied to his council for advice.

"These men are no mob," responded Tyler: "they are people of the best character among us, men of estate, men of religion. They have formed their plan for removing the troops out of the town, and it is impossible they should remain in it. The people will come from the neighboring towns: there will be ten thousand men to effect the removal of the troops, be the consequence what it may."

There was no alternative, and the order for removal was given.

The committee returned to the anxious assembly, still waiting, in the darkness, in the Old South Church, bearing the promise of Col. Dalrymple, that he would begin the preparation in the morning, and that, without any unnecessary delay, the two regiments should be removed to the castle. A joyous burst of applause hailed the announcement of the bloodless victory. That a repeated refusal would have produced immediate bloodshed was evident to all. Warren, a few years later, asserted that "it was Royal George's livery alone which saved the soldiers from annihilation," and that, "had thrice that number of troops belonging to a hostile power been in the town in the same exposed condition, scarcely a man would have lived to see the morning light."

So impressed was Lord North with the account of the scene in the council-chamber, that he ever afterwards referred to the troops in Boston as "*Sam Adams's regiments.*"



## WARREN'S FIRST ORATION.

MARCH, 1772.

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THE fatal calamity of the fifth of March was attributed less to the immediate perpetrator of the bloody deed, than to the authorities who had brought on the disaster by introducing an armed force into the town in time of peace. Leading patriots interested themselves in securing justice for Capt. Preston and his men. Quincy and John Adams conducted their defence before the courts; though so unpleasing was the task, that Quincy writes, that he refused, until "advised and urged to undertake it by an Adams, a Hancock, a Molineux, a Cushing, a Henshaw, a Pemberton, a Warren, a Cooper, and a Phillips."

Yet these same leaders were determined the day should teach its fullest lesson of resistance. The town decided to have an annual commemoration of the massacre. Portraits of the slain were exhibited throughout the town, and even "Snider's Ghost" figured in the window of the Reveres'. The oration on the first anniversary was delivered by James Lovell, master of the Latin School, who, in all times of popular excitement, doubtless won signal favor from his boys by promptly dismissing the school, and recommending his pupils to repair to the gallery of the Old South. Lessons in patriotism, in those days, took precedence of Latin Grammar; and Lovell's pupils in the Old South were many of them the men who fought at Lexington and Yorktown. Lovell's own oration was delivered in the church, and his boys doubtless filled their accustomed corner in the upper gallery.

It was on the second commemoration of the fatal day that the oration was given by Joseph Warren.

On this anniversary, the people met in legal town-meeting, in Faneuil Hall, at nine o'clock, when Richard Dana was chosen moderator. It happened to be the forenoon of the ancient "Thursday Lecture;" and the town voted to adjourn to the Old South at half past twelve.

"That capacious house," says the *Gazette*, "was thronged with a very respectable assembly, consisting of the inhabitants and many of the clergy, not only of this but of the neighboring towns." The vast concourse were held spell-bound by the eloquence of the language, and the frank, noble bearing of the youthful speaker.

After more than a century, that eloquence still holds its power. Better than any history, those words transport us back to the days when liberty meant struggle, and freedom must be poverty or death.

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## THE ORATION.

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Quis talia fando,  
Myrmidonum, Dolopumve, aut duri miles Ulysses,  
Temperet a lacrymis. VIRGIL.

WHEN we turn over the historic page, and trace the rise and fall of states and empires, the mighty revolutions which have so often varied the face of the world strike our minds with solemn surprise; and we are naturally led to endeavor to search out the causes of such astonishing changes.

That man is formed for social life, is an observation which, upon our first inquiry, presents itself immediately to our view; and our reason approves that wise and generous principle which actuated the first founders of civil government,—an institution which hath its origin in the weakness of individuals, and hath for its end, the strength and security of all. And so long as the means of effecting this important end are thoroughly known and religiously attended to, government is one of the richest blessings to mankind, and ought to be held in the highest veneration.

In young and new-formed communities, the grand design of this institution is most generally understood, and most strictly regarded. The motives which urged to the social compact cannot be at once forgotten;

and that equality which is remembered to have subsisted so lately among them, prevents those who are clothed with authority from attempting to invade the freedom of their brethren, or, if such an attempt is made, it prevents the community from suffering the offender to go unpunished. Every member feels it to be his interest, and knows it to be his duty, to preserve inviolate the constitution on which the public safety depends, and is equally ready to assist the magistrate in the execution of the laws, and the subject in defence of his right; and so long as this noble attachment to a constitution, founded on free and benevolent principles, exists in full vigor in any state, that state must be flourishing and happy.

It was this noble attachment to a free constitution, which raised ancient Rome, from the smallest beginnings, to that bright summit of happiness and glory to which she arrived; and it was the loss of this which plunged her from that summit into the black gulf of infamy and slavery. It was this attachment which inspired her senators with wisdom; it was this which glowed in the breasts of her heroes; it was this which guarded her liberties, and extended her dominions, gave peace at home, and commanded respect abroad; and when this decayed, her magistrates lost their reverence for justice and the laws, and degenerated into tyrants and oppressors; her senators, forgetful of their dignity, and seduced by base corruption, betrayed their country; her soldiers, regardless of their relation to the community, and urged only by the hopes of plunder and rapine, unfeelingly committed the most flagrant enormities; and, hired to the trade of death, with relentless fury they perpetrated the most cruel murders, whereby the streets of imperial Rome were drenched with her noblest blood. Thus this empress of the world lost her dominions abroad, and her inhabitants, dissolute in their manners, at length became contented slaves; and she stands, to this day, the scorn and derision of nations, and a monument of this eternal truth, that *public happiness depends on a virtuous and unshaken attachment to a free constitution.*

It was this attachment to a constitution founded on free and benevolent principles, which inspired the first settlers of this country. They saw with grief the daring outrages committed on the free constitution of their native land: they knew that nothing but a civil war could at that time restore its pristine purity. So hard was it to resolve to imbrue their hands in the blood of their brethren, that they chose rather to quit their fair possessions, and seek another habitation in a distant clime. When they came to this new world, which they fairly purchased of the Indian natives, the only rightful proprietors, they cultivated the then barren soil by their incessant labor, and defended their dear-bought possessions with the fortitude of the Christian, and the bravery of the hero.

After various struggles, which, during the tyrannic reigns of the house of Stuart, were constantly kept up between right and wrong, between



liberty and slavery, the connection between Great Britain and this colony was settled, in the reign of King William and Queen Mary, by a compact, the conditions of which were expressed in a charter, by which all the liberties and immunities of British subjects were confined to this province as fully and as absolutely as they possibly could be by any human instrument which can be devised. And it is undeniably true, that the greatest and most important right of a British subject is, that *he shall be governed by no laws but those to which he, either in person or by his representative, hath given his consent*. And this, I will venture to assert, is the grand basis of British freedom. It is interwoven with the constitution; and whenever this is lost, the constitution must be destroyed.

The British constitution (of which ours is a copy) is a happy compound of the three forms, under some of which all governments may be ranged, viz., monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Of these three the British legislature is composed; and without the consent of each branch, nothing can carry with it the force of a law. But when a law is to be passed for raising a tax, that law can originate only in the democratic branch, which is the House of Commons in Britain, and the House of Representatives here. The reason is obvious: they and their constituents are to pay much the largest part of it. But as the aristocratic branch, which in Britain, is the House of Lords, and in this province, the council, are also to pay some part, *their* consent is necessary; and as the monarchic branch, which in Britain is the king, and with us, either the king in person, or the governor whom he shall be pleased to appoint to act in his stead, is supposed to have a just sense of his own interest, which is that of all the subjects in general, *his* consent is also necessary; and when the consent of these three branches is obtained, the taxation is most certainly legal.

Let us now allow ourselves a few moments to examine the late acts of the British parliament for taxing America. Let us with candor judge whether they are constitutionally binding upon us: if they are, *in the name of justice* let us submit to them, without one murmuring word.

First, I would ask whether the members of the British House of Commons are the democracy of this province? If they are, they are either the people of this province, or are elected by the people of this province to represent them, and have therefore a constitutional right to originate a bill for taxing them. It is most certain they are neither; and therefore nothing done by them can be said to be done by the democratic branch of our constitution. I would next ask, whether the Lords, who compose the aristocratic branch of the legislature, are peers of America? I never heard it was (even in these extraordinary times) so much as pretended; and if they are not, certainly no act of theirs can be said to be the act of the aristocratic branch of our constitution. The power of the monarchic branch, we with pleasure acknowledge, resides in the king, who may act

either in person or by his representative; and I freely confess that I can see no reason why a *proclamation* for raising money in America, issued by the king's sole authority, would not be equally consistent with our own constitution, and therefore equally binding upon us, with the late acts of the British parliament for taxing us, for it is plain, that if there is any validity in those acts, it must arise altogether from the monarchical branch of the legislature. And I further think that it would be at least as equitable; for I do not conceive it to be of the least importance to us by whom our property is taken away, so long as it is taken without our consent. And I am very much at a loss to know by what figure of rhetoric the inhabitants of this province can be called *free subjects*, when they are obliged to obey implicitly such laws as are made for them by men three thousand miles off, whom they know not, and whom they never have empowered to act for them; or how they can be said to have *property*, when a body of men over whom they have not the least control, and who are not in any way accountable to them, shall oblige them to deliver up any part, or the whole of their substance, without even asking their consent. And yet whoever pretends that the late acts of the British parliament for taxing America ought to be deemed binding upon us, must admit at once that we are absolute *SLAVES*, and have no property of our own; or else that we may be *freemen*, and at the same time under a necessity of obeying the arbitrary commands of those over whom we have no control or influence; and that we may *have property of our own*, which is entirely at the disposal of another. Such gross absurdities, I believe, will not be relished in this enlightened age; and it can be no matter of wonder that the people quickly perceived and seriously complained of the inroads which these acts must unavoidably make upon their liberty, and of the hazard to which their whole property is by them exposed; for, if they may be taxed without their consent, even in the smallest trifle, they may also, without their consent, be deprived of everything they possess, although never so valuable, never so dear. Certainly it never entered the hearts of our ancestors, that, after so many dangers in this then desolate wilderness, their hard-earned property should be at the disposal of the British parliament; and as it was soon found that this taxation could not be supported by reason and argument, it seemed necessary that one act of oppression should be enforced by another. And therefore, contrary to our just rights, as possessing, or at least having a just title to possess, all the liberties and *immunities* of British subjects, a standing army was established among us in a time of peace; and evidently for the purpose of effecting that, which it was one principal design of the founders of the constitution to prevent (when they declared a standing army in a time of peace to be *AGAINST LAW*), namely, for the enforcement of obedience to acts which, upon fair examination, appeared to be unjust and unconstitutional.

The ruinous consequences of standing armies to free communities, may be seen in the histories of Syracuse, Rome, and many other once flourishing states, some of which have now scarce a name. Their baneful influence is most suddenly felt when they are placed in populous cities; for, by a corruption of morals, the public happiness is immediately affected. And that this is one of the effects of quartering troops in a populous city is a truth, to which many a mourning parent, many a lost, despairing child in this metropolis, must bear a very melancholy testimony. Soldiers are also taught to consider arms as the only arbiters by which every dispute is to be decided between contending states: they are instructed implicitly to obey their commanders, without inquiring into the justice of the cause they are engaged to support. Hence it is, that that they are ever to be dreaded as the ready engines of tyranny and oppression. And it is too observable that they are prone to introduce the same mode of decision in the disputes of individuals; and from thence have often arisen great animosities between them and the inhabitants, who, whilst in a naked, defenceless state, are frequently insulted and abused by an armed soldiery. And this will be more especially the case, when the troops are informed that the intention of their being stationed in any city, is to *overawe the inhabitants*. That this was the avowed design of stationing an armed force in this town, is sufficiently known; and *we*, my fellow-citizens, have seen — *we* have felt — the tragical effects! THE FATAL FIFTH OF MARCH, 1770, *can never be forgotten*. The horrors of *that dreadful night* are but too deeply impressed on our hearts. Language is too feeble to paint the emotions of our souls, when our streets were stained with the *blood of our brethren*; when our ears were wounded by the groans of the dying, and our eyes were tormented with the sight of the mangled bodies of the dead. When our alarmed imagination presented to our view our houses wrapt in flames; our children subjected to the barbarous caprice of the raging soldiery; our beauteous virgins exposed to all the insolence of unbridled passion; our virtuous wives, endeared to us by every tender tie, falling a sacrifice to worse than brutal violence, and perhaps, like the famed Lucretia, distracted with anguish and despair, ending their wretched lives by their own fair hands; when we beheld the authors of our distress parading in our streets, or drawn up in a regular battalia, as though in a hostile city, — our hearts beat to arms. We snatched our weapons, almost resolved, by one decisive stroke, to avenge the death of our *slaughtered brethren*, and to secure from future danger all that we held most dear. But propitious Heaven forbad the bloody carnage, and saved the threatened victims of our too keen resentment, — not by their discipline, not by their regular array. No, it was royal George's livery that proved their shield: it was that which turned the pointed engines of destruction from their breasts. The thoughts of vengeance were soon buried in our inbred affection to Great

Britain; and calm reason dictated a method of removing the troops, more mild than an immediate recourse to the sword. With united efforts, you urged the immediate departure of the troops from the town. You urged it with a resolution which ensured success. You obtained your wishes; and the removal of the troops was effected, without one drop of their blood being shed by the inhabitants.

The immediate actors in the tragedy of that night were surrendered to justice. It is not mine to say how far they were guilty. They have been tried by the country, and **ACQUITTED** of murder! And they are not to be again arraigned at an earthly bar. But, surely, the men who have promiscuously scattered death amidst the innocent inhabitants of a populous city, ought to see well to it that they be prepared to stand at the bar of an omniscient Judge! And all who contrived or encouraged the stationing troops in this place, have reasons of eternal importance to reflect with deep contrition on their base designs, and humbly to repent of their impious machinations.

The infatuation which hath seemed, for a number of years, to prevail in the British councils (with regard to us) is truly astonishing! What can be proposed by the repeated attacks made upon our freedom, I really cannot surmise. Even leaving justice and humanity out of the question, I do not know one single advantage which can arise to the British nation from our being enslaved. I know not of any gains which can be wrung from us by oppression, which they may not obtain from us by our own consent in the smooth channel of commerce. We wish the wealth and prosperity of Britain: we contribute largely to both. Doth what we contribute lose all its value because it is done voluntarily? The amazing increase of riches to Britain, the great rise of the value of her lands, the flourishing state of her navy, are striking proofs of the advantages derived to her from her commerce with the colonies. And it is our earnest desire that she may still continue to enjoy the same emoluments, until her streets are paved with *American gold*, — only let us have the pleasure of calling it our own, whilst it is in our hands. But this, it seems, is too great a favor. We are to be governed by the absolute commands of others. Our property is to be taken away without our consent. If we complain, our complaints are treated with contempt. If we assert our rights, that assertion is deemed insolence. If we humbly offer to submit the matter to the impartial decision of reason, the sword is judged the most proper argument to silence our murmurs! But this cannot long be the case. Surely, the British nation will not suffer the reputation of their justice and their honor to be thus sported away by a capricious ministry. No! They will, in a short time, open their eyes to their true interest. They nourish, in their own breasts, a noble love of liberty. They hold her dear; and they know that all who have once possessed her charms had rather die than suffer her to be torn from their embraces. They are also sensible that Britain



is so deeply interested in the prosperity of the colonies, that she must, eventually, feel every wound given to their freedom. They cannot be ignorant that more dependence may be placed on the affections of a brother, than on the forced service of a slave. They must approve your efforts for the preservation of your rights. From a sympathy of soul, they must pray for your success. And I doubt not but they will, ere long, exert themselves effectually to redress your grievances. Even in the dissolute reign of King Charles II., when the House of Commons impeached the Earl of Clarendon of high treason, the first article on which they founded their accusation was, that "he had designed a standing army to be raised, and to govern the kingdom thereby." And the eighth article was, that "he had introduced an arbitrary government into his majesty's plantation." A terrifying example to those who are now forging chains for this country!

You have, my friends and countrymen, frustrated the designs of your enemies, by your unanimity and fortitude. It was your union and determined spirit which expelled those troops, who polluted your streets with innocent blood. You have appointed this anniversary as a standing memorial of the bloody consequences of placing an armed force in a populous city, and of your deliverance from the dangers which then seemed to hang over your heads. And I am confident that you never will betray the least want of spirit when called upon to guard your freedom. None but they who set a just value upon the blessings of liberty are worthy to enjoy her. Your illustrious fathers were her zealous votaries. When the blasting frowns of tyranny drove her from public view, they clasped her in their arms, they cherished her in their generous bosoms, they brought her safe over the rough ocean, and fixed her seat in this then dreary wilderness. They nursed her infant age with the most tender care. For her sake, they patiently bore the severest hardships: for her support, they underwent the most rugged toils. In her defence, they boldly encountered the most alarming dangers. Neither the ravenous beasts that ranged the woods for prey, nor the more furious savages of the wilderness, could damp their ardor. Whilst with one hand they broke the stubborn glebe, with the other they grasped their weapons, ever ready to protect her from danger. No sacrifice — not even their own blood — was esteemed too rich a libation for her altar! God prospered their valor. They preserved her brilliancy unsullied. They enjoyed her whilst they lived, and dying, bequeathed the dear inheritance to your care. And as they left you this glorious legacy, they have undoubtedly transmitted to you some portion of their noble spirit, to inspire you with virtue to merit her, and courage to preserve her. You surely cannot, with such examples before your eyes, — as every page of the history of this country affords, — suffer your liberties to be ravished from you by lawless force, or cajoled away by flattery and fraud.

The voice of your fathers' blood cries to you from the ground, *My sons, scorn to be SLAVES!* In vain we met the frowns of tyrants; in vain we crossed the boisterous ocean, found a new world, and prepared it for the happy residence of liberty; in vain we toiled; in vain we fought; we bled in vain, if you (our offspring) want valor to repel the assaults of her invaders! Stain not the glory of your worthy ancestors; but, like them, resolve never to part with your birthright. Be wise in your deliberations, and determined in your exertions for the preservation of your liberties. Follow not the dictates of passion, but enlist yourselves under the sacred banner of reason. Use every method in your power to secure your rights, — at least prevent the curses of posterity from being heaped upon your memories.

If you, with united zeal and fortitude, oppose the torrent of oppression; if you feel the true fire of patriotism burning in your breasts; if you, from your souls, despise the most gaudy dress that slavery can wear; if you really prefer the lonely cottage (whilst blest with liberty) to gilded palaces, surrounded with the ensigns of slavery, you may have the fullest assurance that tyranny, with her whole accursed train, will hide their hideous heads in confusion, shame, and despair. If you perform your part, you must have the strongest confidence, that the same almighty Being who protected your pious and venerable forefathers, who enabled them to turn a barren wilderness into a fruitful field, who so often made bare his arm for their salvation, will still be mindful of you — their offspring.

May this almighty Being graciously preside in all our councils. May he direct us to such measures as he himself shall approve, and be pleased to bless. May we ever be a people favored of God. May our land be a land of liberty, — the seat of virtue, the asylum of the oppressed, a name and a praise in the whole earth, — until the last shock of time shall bury the empires of the world in one common, undistinguished ruin!

## THE BOSTON TEA-PARTY.

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OF all the many gatherings which the Old South Church has witnessed, none have been more familiar than those which preceded the Boston Tea-Party. We all know the story, how George III., finding the Stamp Act beyond his power, strove to conciliate his distant subjects, whose refusal to import was crippling British commerce. That the tea tax, which alone remained, added nothing to the price of tea, mattered not to the colonists. With one accord, they had refused to receive the cargoes. "The king means to try the question with America," declared Lord North; and the ships were sent. The issue was to be tried in Boston. Her tea ships were on the water. The governor himself, under the name of his sons, was selected as one of the consignees.

In the night between the first and second of November, a knock was heard at the door of each of the persons commissioned by the East India Company, and a summons left for them to appear without fail at Liberty Tree, on the following Wednesday, to resign their commissions. The freemen of Boston and the neighboring towns were desired to appear as witnesses. At the appointed time no consignees arrived; and the committee which waited upon them met with a blank refusal. One other meeting — this time a formal, legal one — was held to entreat compliance. When the refusal was repeated, the town passed no vote, uttered no opinion; but the meeting immediately dissolved. Ominous indeed was that silence!

On Sunday, the twenty-eighth of November, 1773, the "Dartmouth" sailed down the bay. To keep the sabbath strictly was the New-England usage. But hours were precious.

Let the tea be entered, and it would be beyond the power of the consignee to send it back. The selectmen held one meeting by day, and another in the evening; but they sought in vain for the consignees, who had taken refuge in the castle.

The committee of correspondence were more successful. They also met on Sunday, and obtained from Quaker Rotch (the owner of the "Dartmouth") a promise not to enter his ship until Tuesday, and authorized Samuel Adams to invite the committees of the five surrounding towns (Dorchester, Roxbury, Brookline, Cambridge, and Charlestown), with their own townsmen and those of Boston, to hold a mass meeting the following morning. With electric speed the summons ran; and Faneuil Hall could not contain the people that, on Monday, flocked around its doors. The concourse was the largest ever known; and past the doors of the council-chamber, past the house of the governor, the torrent swept up to the Old South Church.

That the tea should be returned whence it came, was voted by acclamation. Not a chest should land on American soil: not one cent should be paid in tribute. Yet the meeting was calm and serious. A few speakers talked in a style which was violent and inflammatory; but moderate counsel prevailed. "Never was Adams in greater glory," wrote the indignant governor. A patriot from Rhode Island was so impressed with the regular and sensible conduct of the meeting, that he says he should have thought himself rather in the British senate than in the promiscuous assembly of the people of a remote colony, had he not been convinced by the genuine integrity and manly hardihood of its rhetoricians that they were not "tainted with venality nor debauched with luxury." The speeches which won this tribute perished with the hour, but the men who gave them utterance bear witness to their tenor.

If the king was determined to try the issue with America, America was equally determined to try the issue with the king; and in the Old South Church that day were many whose ancestors had taken refuge in the desert from the tyranny of



another King of England, who had found a like propensity for trying questions with his subjects somewhat unsatisfactory.

The meeting, after their forcible resolutions to pay no duties, adjourned till three o'clock, to give the consignees time to make all necessary concessions. In the afternoon, the captain and the owner of the "Dartmouth" were summoned into the presence of the great assembly. The "usurpers," as Gov. Hutchinson called the patriots there collected, were peremptory in their demands. Capt. Hall and Mr. Rotch were charged not to land the tea, upon their peril; and a watch of twenty-five people was appointed to prevent any attempt by night. Censure was boldly passed upon the governor for having ventured to summon the aid of the officers of the law to protect the safety of the town. Such conduct was considered an insult to the people, who felt perfectly able to protect themselves. The meeting in the Old South Church was to fulfil the laws, and not to violate them. The duty upon tea had been pronounced unconstitutional; and the people, in the absence of a governor who could defend their liberties, intended to take that office upon themselves. In vain his excellency summoned the council to interfere. From the windows of the council-chamber, they looked calmly down on the concourse stretching beyond the church door almost to their own. Bowdoin, Dexter, and Otis, and their colleagues, felt little uneasiness at the proceedings at the Old South. In vain he called upon the cadets, — his own body-guard. What could be expected of men under Hancock, when their colonel himself was in the meeting-house pledging life and fortune in the measures there determined? The governor, in despair, was forced to look helplessly on, while the regulation of the town was taken quietly from his hands. Meanwhile, in the "Sanctuary of Freedom," people were growing impatient. No reply had come from the consignees. John Hancock rose in their behalf, petitioning for further delay; and "out of great tenderness for them," the meeting adjourned to nine the next morning.

On Tuesday, at the appointed hour, the Old South doors again stood open, and the crowd once more assembled. At last, a letter from the consignees had come, stating that, with their orders from the East India Company, it was utterly out of their power to send back the tea, but that they were willing to store it until they could send to England for further advice. The wrath of the meeting was kindling, when Greenleaf, Sheriff of Suffolk, entered the church, bearing a proclamation from the governor of the province. This he begged permission of the moderator to read. Opposition was made to its reception, but Samuel Adams spoke in favor of granting the request; and the sheriff read to the assembled people the following proclamation:—

MASSACHUSETTS }  
BAY.

BY THE GOVERNOR.

*To JONATHAN WILLIAMS, Esq., acting as Moderator of an Assembly of People in the Town of Boston, and to the People so assembled:*

WHEREAS printed notifications were, on Monday, the 29th instant, posted in divers places in the Town of Boston, and published in the newspapers of that day, calling upon the people to assemble together for certain unlawful purposes, in such notification mentioned; and whereas great numbers of people belonging to the Town of Boston, on the said day, did then and there proceed to choose a moderator, and to consult and debate and resolve upon ways and means for carrying such unlawful purposes into execution, openly violating, defying and setting at nought the good and wholesome laws of the Province, and the constitution of government under which they live; and whereas the people thus assembled did vote or agree to adjourn or continue their meeting to this the 30th instant, and great numbers are again met and assembled for the like purposes in the said Town of Boston,—in faithfulness to my trust, and as His Majesty's representative within the Province, I am bound to bear testimony against this violation of the Laws. And I warn, exhort, and require of you, and each of you thus unlawfully assembled, forthwith to disperse and to surcease all further unlawful proceedings, at your utmost peril.

GIVEN under my hand at Milton, in the Province aforesaid, the 30th day of November, 1773, in the fourteenth year of His Majesty's reign.

T. HUTCHINSON.

*By His Excellency's command,  
Thos. Flucker, Secr'y.*

This authoritative summons produced but little effect on the men in that "Seed-bed of Rebellion." Hisses of derision followed the retreating sheriff as he returned to his helpless master, leaving the citizens of Boston to provide for the welfare of the state.

Copley, the artist (son-in-law of Clarke, one of the consignees), seems to have acted the part of mediator between the people and the loyalists. No one could have been better fitted for the office, as he was a general favorite in Boston; and, though at the crisis he sided with the government, his suggestions were often listened to. After the storm of hisses had subsided, and the assembly had unanimously voted not to disperse, Copley desired to know whether, in case he could prevail upon the Clarkes to present themselves before the people, they would be treated with civility. The promise was given; and two hours were allowed him to produce his friends, during which time the meeting adjourned. He had to go to the castle by water, and failed in his mission, as the Clarkes refused to appear. Copley returned some time after the meeting had reorganized, hoping that, if he had exceeded the time allowed him, the difficulty of a passage by water at that season would be considered an excuse. He assured the meeting that he had exerted his utmost influence with the consignees, and even convinced them that they could appear in safety, but that his friends could see no advantage in any such appearance, since they could only reiterate their former statements. They could go no further without insuring their own ruin; but as they had not been active in introducing the tea, so also they would do nothing to obstruct the people in their procedures with regard to it.

Immediately the question was put to the meeting whether the reply of Mr. Copley was in the least degree satisfactory. An indignant "No" was the unanimous response.

Meanwhile Mr. Rotch, the owner of the "Dartmouth," had been summoned before the tribunal; and in his presence a vote was passed, that the cargo of the "Dartmouth" should be returned "in the same bottom in which it came."

Mr. Rotch informed the meeting that he should protest against the whole proceedings, as he had done against the proceedings of yesterday ; but nevertheless, overawed by the iron will of a determined people, he agreed to the requirements. Capt. Hall was, at his peril, forbidden to assist in unloading the tea, and consented to carry it back to London.

Then a vote was passed that John Rowe, Esq., part owner of Capt. Bruce's ship, which was soon expected, and also Mr. Timmins, factor for Capt. Coffin's brig, should be forthwith summoned. Rowe was informed of the consent of Mr. Rotch, that the tea on board the "Dartmouth" should be returned without unloading ; and that it was the expectation of the assembly before him, that he should give similar pledges for the tea expected with Capt. Bruce. Rowe declared that the ship was wholly in the charge of that officer, but promised to use his influence to promote the wishes of his fellow-citizens, and that he would give them immediate information of the arrival of the ship.

Mr. Timmins, on his part, assured the people that the brig to which they referred was owned in Nantucket, but that he would pledge his word of honor, that, while she was under his care, no tea should be landed, nor should it be touched until the arrival of the owner.

The assurances of Mr. Rowe and Mr. Timmins were voted to be satisfactory.

Resolutions were passed against such merchants of the province as had even inadvertently imported tea, while subject to duty ; and, for the future, it was declared, that any persons concerned in any such importation should be esteemed enemies to their country. It was voted to be the determination of the meeting to prevent all sale or landing of tea, and that the people were prepared to carry their votes and resolutions into execution, at the risk of their lives and property.

Well might such a declaration be held as a manifesto of rebellion ! Hutchinson tried to fasten it as a proof of treason

upon some of the leaders ; but “ though it was in every one’s mouth, that Hancock said at the close of the meeting, he would be willing to spend his fortune and life in so good a cause, not one witness could be found to take oath to it.”

Samuel Adams, John Hancock, William Phillips, John Rowe, and Jonathan Williams were appointed to send copies of the above resolutions through the colonies, and even to England herself.

Six post-riders were chosen, to give notice to the country towns, in case of an attempt to land the tea by force ; and the committee of correspondence, by order of the meeting, took care that a military watch was regularly kept up by volunteers, armed with muskets and bayonets, who, at every half-hour through the night, regularly passed the word “ All is well,” like sentinels in a garrison. Were they to be molested by night, the tolling of the bells would be the signal for a general uprising. Having perfected all these arrangements in the most orderly and business-like manner, the meeting was dissolved.

Two more tea ships arrived, and were anchored beside the “ Dartmouth,” off Griffin’s wharf, that one guard might suffice for all. The legal situation of these ships now became a serious consideration. Only twenty days were allowed before the vessels would be liable to seizure, unless they had disembarked their cargo. Those of the “ Dartmouth ” were running fast. Mr. Rotch, despite his protestations, seemed rather lax in his preparations to return the ship to England. At last, the following placard appeared in every quarter of the town : —

**FRIENDS! BRETHREN! COUNTRYMEN!**

The perfidious arts of your restless enemies to render ineffectual the late resolutions of the body of the people, demand your assembling at the Old South Meeting-house, precisely at ten o’clock this day, at which time the bells will ring.

The meeting on Tuesday, December fourteenth, is said to have been larger than any of the preceding. People from a distance of twenty miles attended. A citizen of Weston,



Samuel Williams Savage, was appointed moderator. Its business may be briefly told. Captain Bruce, induced, perhaps by the promised influence of the patriot Rowe, agreed to ask for an immediate clearance for London, as soon as he had landed all his goods except the tea. Rotch was again summoned, and enjoined at his peril to demand of the collector of customs a clearance for his ship; and Samuel Adams and eight others were chosen a committee to see that this was done. The meeting then adjourned to the sixteenth, — the last of the twenty days before it would become legal for the revenue officers to seize the ship and land its cargo at the castle. The town's committee accompanied Rotch to the lodging of the collector, who refused to give an answer until the next morning. The Boston committee of correspondence had the last of their preparatory meetings on Tuesday evening. Long and important were the discussions, and the plans decided on were fraught with peril. That little body of stout-hearted men were making history that should endure for ages. But the seal of silence was upon the pen of the secretary as well as upon the lips of the members. Morning and evening, for two days, they had been in close communion. Yet the journal for that time contains only the brief and prudent entry: "*No business transacted, matter of record.*"

Wednesday came, and one more attempt was made to obtain a clearance for the "Dartmouth." The world should not say, in future times, that efforts were wanting to secure justice up to the last moment. Adams, Kent, and the others of the town's committee accompanied Rotch to the collector. This time, he was with the comptroller at the Custom House; and both unequivocally and finally refused to allow the ships to depart. This was conclusive as far as the powers of the revenue officers were concerned; but there remained one more chance.

The morning of Thursday, the sixteenth of December, 1773, dawned upon Boston, — a day by far the most momentous in her annals. The skies were rainy, no handbill was

posted in the streets, no rally-words were seen in the journals; but the inhabitants of the town suspended business, and thronged to the Old South Meeting-house, whither the people flocked for twenty miles around. "Nearly seven thousand gentlemen, merchants, yeomen, and others, — respectable for their rank and abilities, and venerable for their age and character," — constituted the assembly. There was Adams, the "GREAT INCENDIARY," before whose might the representatives of England had meekly bowed; there were the ardent Quincy and the eloquent Warren, and Hancock, colonel of his excellency's own guard. There were the selectmen of the town, and there the councillors of the province. All the power of Massachusetts had assembled for the death-struggle. The hour of deliberation had passed. Exile, poverty, and death were before them, or the slavery of submission. The assembly knew no hesitation. Every peaceable means should be first tried; but the issue was decided.

The committee appointed to accompany Mr. Rotch to the collector, reported that he had made his demand after the following manner: —

"I am required and compelled, at my peril, by a body of people assembled in the Old South Meeting-house, to make a demand to you, to give me a clearance for the ship 'Dartmouth,' with the tea on board."

Upon which, one of the committee had observed that *they* were present simply as witnesses of the demand, and of the answer that should be given.

Thereupon the collector had said to Mr. Rotch, "Then it is *you* that make the demand?" and Rotch had answered, "Yes: I am compelled, at my peril."

The refusal which had been then accorded him availed Rotch little. He was reminded that he had solemnly assured a former meeting that the tea should be returned. If the Custom House refused a clearance, he must forthwith apply to the governor for a pass, so that the ship might that day proceed to London. The governor had stolen away to Mil-



ton : so, bidding Rotch make all haste, the meeting adjourned until three o'clock.

At that hour, Rotch had not returned. It was incidentally voted (as other towns had done) to abstain, totally, from the use of tea ; and every town was advised to appoint its committee of inspection, to prevent any admission by stealth. Then, since the governor might refuse his pass, the momentous question recurred, " Whether it be the sense and determination of this body to abide by their former resolutions with respect to not suffering the tea to be landed ? " On this question, Samuel Adams and Young addressed the meeting, which now embraced seven thousand men. There was among them a patriot of fervid feeling, passionately devoted to the liberty of his country, — still young, his eye bright, his cheek glowing with hectic fever. He knew his strength was ebbing. The work of vindicating American freedom must be soon done or he will be no party to the great achievement. He rises, but it is to restrain ; and being truly brave and truly resolved, he speaks the language of moderation : —

" Shouts and hosannas will not terminate the trials of this day, nor popular resolves, harangues, and acclamations vanquish our foes. We must be grossly ignorant of the value of the prize for which we contend, of the power combined against us, of the inveterate malice and insatiable revenge which actuate our enemies (public and private, abroad and in our bosom), if we hope that we shall end this controversy without the sharpest conflicts. Let us consider the issue, before we advance to those measures which must bring on the most trying and terrible struggle this country ever saw." Thus spoke the younger Quincy.

" Now that our hand is to the plough," returned the answer, " there must be no looking back." And the whole assembly of seven thousand voted that the tea should not be landed.

When, at five o'clock, Mr. Rotch still had not arrived, the people began to be very uneasy. But the more judicious,

fearing what would be the consequences, begged them to have patience yet, "for the reason that they ought to do everything in their power to send the tea back according to their resolves." This touched the pride of the assembly, and they agreed to remain together yet one hour.

More than any of the other speakers, Quincy engaged the attention of the impatient audience. At one time, notwithstanding his plea for moderation, he seems, from the eastern gallery, to have burst into animate invective against the measures of the British government. Harrison Gray, standing upon the floor, in reply, warned the "young gentleman in the gallery" against the consequences of such intemperate language, saying that such words would no longer be borne by the administration, but would be punished as they deserved. "If the old gentleman on the floor," responded Quincy, "intends by his warning to the young gentleman in the gallery to utter only a friendly voice, in the spirit of paternal advice, I thank him. If his object be to terrify and intimidate, I despise him. I see the clouds which now rise thick and fast upon our horizon. The thunders roll, and the lightnings play! And to that God who rides on the whirlwind, and directs the storm, I commend my country!"

Various were the suggestions which occupied the time of waiting, as the light faded away and still no answer came. "Who knows how tea will mingle with salt water?" cried the undaunted Rowe. And the question was greeted with applause. All were convinced, as the cold night darkened without, that the last scene was about to be enacted. Everything was prepared and in readiness. Yet few could have known what was intended. Should the governor give his clearance, the ships would be sent at once to sea, and stout arms were ready to assist in working them down the harbor. Should he refuse, it would be impossible to pass the guns of the castle or the war ships at the Narrows; and but one alternative remained.

Only the flickering of candles lighted the Old South Church when, through the darkness, Rotch at length re-

turned. The governor had refused the pass. Solemnly arose the voice of Samuel Adams: "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country." Then rang from the gallery the signal war-whoop. It was re-echoed from the street below. The meeting adjourned to Griffin's wharf, and the work was done.

## THE OLD SOUTH, FROM THE TEA-PARTY TO 1775.

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“THERE is to this edifice,” said one of Boston’s orators, “not only a natural body, but also a spiritual body, — the immortal soul of Independence.”

Already, even in England, men were beginning to recognize the power even of its very name.

“The transactions at Liberty Tree,” wrote Samuel Adams, “were treated with scorn and ridicule; but when they heard of the resolutions in the Old South Meeting-house, the place whence the orders issued for the removal of the troops in 1770, they put on grave countenances.”

“*Delenda est Carthago!*” was the cry in the British parliament. That nest of hornets must be trampled in the dust, as a warning to the whole continent. Boston has presumed to think for herself, and to act for herself, not by the excesses of mobs, such as even royal London has witnessed, but in solemn public conclave. No individuals can henceforth bear the censure. By the resolutions in the Old South Meeting-house, the town itself has braved the vengeance of the British crown; and the whole town must bear the penalty.

The BOSTON PORT ACT followed, a measure which reduced her to a state of siege. War ships blockaded the harbor. Not a stick of wood could be cut from the islands: not a row-boat could approach her wharves. Even fish for the starving poor, from Marblehead, had to be carried thirty miles by land. Boston was excommunicate. Her sister colonies were forbidden all intercourse with her; and she was branded before their eyes as an example of signal crimes and speedy justice.

But the patriots never wavered. Troops might obstruct the streets, war ships blockade the harbor; but the committees from the Boston town-meetings pursued the even tenor of their way. Relief from other places was distributed; work for the poorest was provided; constant correspondence was maintained with all the other colonies. Everything was done soberly, and in order. Gage and his myrmidons could only look idly on, while the town administered her own affairs. Even during a serious conflagration, the services of the military were courteously declined, on the ground that the "regulations of the town rendered their assistance unnecessary." For all his influence in the town of Boston, Gage might as well have been stationed in Patagonia.

It was during the pause of expectation which preceded these stringent acts, while news of the reception in England of the Boston Tea-Party was still upon the water, that Hancock was called upon to deliver the fourth oration, on the anniversary of the fifth of March. Though of pleasing address and winning manners, he was supposed to be little of a writer; and his selection on this occasion was rather a tribute to the man than to the speaker. But either the topic proved inspiring, or, as was more than suspected by his friends and confidently asserted by his enemies, he received some assistance in his composition; for the orator far exceeded all expectations, and his speech was most enthusiastically received. The church was filled to overflowing, and among the crowd were all the leading patriots of Boston. The youthful speaker addressed the assembled multitude with becoming modesty: —

MEN, BRETHREN, FATHERS, AND FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: —

THE attentive gravity, the venerable appearance of this crowded audience, the dignity which I behold in the countenances of so many in this great assembly, the solemnity of the occasion upon which we have met together (joined to a consideration of the part I am to take in the important business of this day), fill me with an awe hitherto unknown, and heighten the sense which I have ever had of my unworthiness to fill this sacred desk. . . . And I pray that my sincere attachment to the interest of



my country, and hearty detestation of every design formed against her liberties, may be admitted as some apology for my appearance in this place.

. . . Security to the persons and properties of the governed, is so obviously the design and end of civil government, that to attempt a logical proof of it, would be like burning tapers at noonday to assist the sun in enlightening the world. And it cannot be either virtuous or honorable, to attempt to support a government of which this is not the great and principal basis. And it is to the last degree vicious and infamous to attempt to support a government which manifestly tends to render the persons and properties of the governed insecure. Some boast of being friends to government. I am a friend to righteous government, — to a government founded upon the principles of reason and justice, — but I glory in publicly avowing my eternal enmity to tyranny. Is the present system which the British administration have adopted for the government of the colonies, a righteous government? or is it tyranny? Here suffer me to ask (and would to Heaven there could be an answer!) what tenderness, what regard, respect, or consideration, has Great Britain shown, in their late transactions, for the security of the persons or properties of the inhabitants of the colonies? or rather, what have they omitted doing to destroy that security? They have declared that they have ever had (and of right ought ever to have) full power to make laws of sufficient validity to bind the colonies in all cases whatever. They have exercised this pretended right by imposing a tax upon us, without our consent. And, lest we should show some reluctance at parting with our property, her fleets and armies are sent to enforce their mad pretensions. The town of Boston, ever faithful to the British crown, has been invested by a British fleet. The troops of George III. have crossed the wide Atlantic, not to engage an enemy, but to assist a band of *traitors* in trampling on the rights and liberties of his most loyal subjects in America, — those rights and liberties which, as a father, he ought ever to regard, and as a king, he is bound in honor to defend from violations, even at the risk of his own life.

Let not the history of the illustrious house of Brunswick inform posterity, that a king, descended from that glorious monarch George II., once sent his British subjects to conquer and enslave his subjects in America. But be perpetual infamy entailed upon that villain who dared to advise his master to such execrable measures. For it was easy to foresee the consequences which so naturally followed upon sending troops into America, to enforce obedience to acts of the British parliament which neither God nor man ever empowered them to make. It was reasonable to expect that troops who knew the errand they were sent upon, would treat the people whom they were to subjugate with a cruelty and haughtiness, which too often buries the honorable character of a soldier in the disgraceful name of an unfeeling ruffian. The troops, upon their first

arrival, took possession of our senate house, and pointed their cannon against the judgment hall, and even continued them there whilst the supreme court of judicature for this province was actually sitting to decide upon the lives and fortunes of the king's subjects. Our streets nightly resounded with the noise of riot and debauchery. Our peaceful citizens were hourly exposed to shameful insults, and often felt the effects of their violence and outrage. But this was not all. As though they thought it not enough to violate our civil rights, they endeavored to deprive us of the enjoyment of our religious privileges, to vitiate our morals, and thereby render us deserving of destruction. Hence the rude din of arms which broke in upon your solemn devotions in your temples, on that day hallowed by heaven, and set apart by God himself for his peculiar worship. Hence impious oaths and blasphemies so often tortured your unaccustomed ear. . . . Did not a reverence for religion sensibly decay? Did not our infants almost learn to lisp out curses before they knew their horrid import? . . .

. . . But let not the miscreant host vainly imagine that we feared their arms. No! them we despised. We dread nothing but slavery. Death is the creature of a poltroon's brains. It is immortality to sacrifice ourselves for the salvation of our country. We fear not death. That gloomy night, the pale-faced moon, and the affrighted stars that hurried through the sky, can witness that we fear not death. Our hearts, which at the recollection glow with a rage that four revolving years have scarcely taught us to restrain, can witness that we fear not death. And happy it is for those who dared to insult us, that their naked bones are not now piled up an everlasting monument of Massachusetts' bravery. But they retired: they fled. And in that flight they found their only safety. . . .

. . . Standing armies are sometimes (I would by no means say generally, much less universally) composed of persons who have rendered themselves unfit to live in civil society, — who have no other motives of conduct than those which a desire of the present gratification of their passions suggests; who have no property in any country; men who have lost or given up their own liberties, and envy those who enjoy liberty; who are equally indifferent to the glory of a George or a Lewis; who for the addition of one penny a day to their wages, would desert from the Christian cross, and fight under the crescent of the Turkish sultan. From such men as these, what has not a state to fear? . . .

But since standing armies are so hurtful to a state, perhaps my countrymen may demand some substitute, some other means of rendering us secure against the incursions of a foreign enemy. But can you be one moment at a loss? Will not a well-disciplined militia afford you ample security against foreign foes? We want not courage: it is discipline alone in which we are exceeded by the most formidable troops that ever trod the earth. Surely our hearts flutter no more at the sound of



war, than did those of the immortal band of Persia, the Macedonian phalanx, the invincible Roman legions, the Turkish Janissaries, the Gens des Armes of France, or the well-known Grenadiers of Britain. A well-disciplined militia is a safe, an honorable guard to a community like this, whose inhabitants are by nature brave, and are laudably tenacious of that freedom in which they were born. From a well-regulated militia we have nothing to fear: their interest is the same with that of the state. When a country is invaded, the militia are ready to appear in its defence; they march into the field with that fortitude which a consciousness of the justice of their cause inspires; they do not jeopard their lives for a master who considers them only as the instruments of his ambition, and whom they regard only as the daily dispenser of the scanty pittance of bread and water. No, they fight for their houses, their lands, for their wives, their children, for all who claim the tenderest names, and are held dearest in their hearts: they fight for their liberty, and for themselves, and for their God. And let it not offend, if I say that no militia ever appeared in more flourishing condition than that of this province now doth; and pardon me, if I say of this town in particular. I mean not to boast: I would not excite envy, but manly emulation. We have all one common cause: let it therefore be our only contest, who shall most contribute to the security of the liberties of America. And may the same kind Providence which has watched over this country from her infant state, still enable us to defeat our enemies. I cannot here forbear noticing the signal manner in which the designs of those who wish not well to us have been discovered. The dark deeds of a treacherous cabal, have been brought to public view. You now know the serpents who, whilst cherished in your bosoms, were darting their envenomed stings into the vitals of the constitution. But the representatives of the people have fixed a mark on those ungrateful monsters, which, though it may not make them so secure as Cain of old, yet renders them at least as infamous. Indeed it would be affrontive to the tutelar deity of this country even to despair of saving it from all the snares which human policy can lay.

True it is, that the British ministry have annexed a salary to the office of the governor of this province, to be paid out of a revenue raised in America without our consent. They have attempted to render our courts of justice the instruments of extending the authority of acts of the British parliament over this colony, by making the judges dependant on the British administration for their support. But this people will never be enslaved with their eyes open. The moment they knew that the governor was not such a governor as the charter of the province points out, he lost his power of hurting them. They were alarmed. They suspected him, have guarded against him; and he has found that a wise and a brave people, when they know their danger, are fruitful in expedients to escape it.

The courts of judicature also so far lost their dignity, by being supposed to be under an undue influence, that our representatives thought it absolutely necessary to resolve that they were bound to declare, that they would not receive any other salary besides that which the general court should grant them; and if they did not make this declaration, that it would be the duty of the house to impeach them.

Great expectations were also formed from the artful scheme of allowing the East India Company to export tea to America, upon their own account. This certainly, had it succeeded, would have effected the purpose of the contrivers, and gratified the most sanguine wishes of our adversaries. We soon should have found our trade in the hands of foreigners, and taxes imposed on everything which we consumed; nor would it have been strange, if, in a few years, a company in London should have purchased an exclusive right of trading to America. But their plot was soon discovered. The people soon were aware of the poison which with so much craft and subtilty had been concealed. Loss and disgrace ensued; and, perhaps, this long-concerted masterpiece of policy may issue in the total disuse of tea, in this country, which will eventually be the saving of the lives and the estates of thousands. Yet while we rejoice that the adversary has not hitherto prevailed against us, let us by no means put off the harness. Restless malice and disappointed ambition, will still suggest new measures to our inveterate enemies. Therefore let us also be ready to take the field whenever danger calls; let us be united, and strengthen the hands of each other, by promoting a general union among us. Much has been done by the committees of correspondence for this and the other towns of this province, towards uniting the inhabitants: let them still go on and prosper. Much has been done by the committees of correspondence for the houses of assembly, in this and our sister colonies, for uniting the inhabitants of the whole continent, for the security of their common interest. May success ever attend their generous endeavors. But permit me here to suggest a general congress of deputies, from the several houses of assembly on the continent, as the most effectual method of establishing such an union as the present posture of our affairs requires. At such a congress, a firm foundation may be laid for the security of our rights and liberties; a system may be formed for our common safety, by a strict adherence to which, we shall be able to frustrate any attempts to overthrow our constitution, restore peace and harmony to America, and secure honor and wealth to Great Britain, even against the inclinations of her ministers, whose duty it is to study her welfare. . . .

. . . I conjure you by all that is dear, by all that is honorable, by all that is sacred, not only that ye pray, but that you act; that, if necessary, ye fight, and even die, for the prosperity of our Jerusalem. Break in sunder, with noble disdain, the bonds with which the Philistines have bound

you. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed, by the soft arts of luxury and effeminacy, into the pit digged for your destruction. Despise the glare of wealth. That people who pay greater respect to a wealthy villain than to an honest upright man in poverty, almost deserve to be enslaved: they plainly show, that wealth, however it may be acquired, is, in their esteem, to be preferred to virtue.

But I thank God, that America abounds in men who are superior to all temptation, whom nothing can divert from a steady pursuit of the interest of their country; who are at once its ornament and safeguard. . . .

I have the most animating confidence that the present noble struggle for liberty, will terminate gloriously for America. And let us play the man for our God, and for the cities of our God. While we are using the means in our power, let us humbly commit our righteous cause to the great Lord of the universe, who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity. And having secured the approbation of our hearts, by a faithful and unwearied discharge of our duty to our country, let us joyfully leave her important concerns in the hands of Him who raiseth up and putteth down the empires and kingdoms of the world as he pleases; and with cheerful submission to his sovereign will devoutly say, —

“Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, — yet we will rejoice in the Lord, we will joy in the God of our salvation.”

Christopher Monk, who had been most severely wounded in the massacre, was present; and, as the meeting broke up, a very generous collection was taken for the cripple, whom they designated as “a shocking monument of that horrid transaction.” A committee, with Samuel Adams at their head, was appointed to wait on the orator with the thanks of the town for his elegant and spirited oration, and also to request a copy of it for the press; and “the thanks of the town were unanimously voted to Adams for his good services as moderator.” The following is a view of the occasion from across the Atlantic: —

“The saints professing loyalty and godliness in Boston, send us, by every vessel from their port, accumulated proofs of their treasons and rebellions. That mighty wise patriot, Mr. John Hancock, from the Old South Meeting-house, has

lately repeated a hash of abusive, treasonable stuff, composed for him by the joint efforts of the Reverend Divine, Samuel Cooper, — that Rose of Sharon, — and by the very honest Samuel Adams, — Clerk, Psalm-singer, purloiner and curer of bacon. The temper and abilities of the rebellious saints in Boston are easily discoverable in Hancock's oration, — who, at his delivery of it, was attended by most of his majesty's council, the majority of the House of Representatives, the selectmen, justices of the peace, and the rest of the rebellious herd of calves, asses, knaves, and fools, which compose the faction."

If the Boston Port Act was intended to frighten the neighboring colonies into submission, it failed signally of its object. With one accord, they hastened to testify their allegiance to the common cause, and testify that the sufferings of one were the sufferings of all. Warren's Solemn League and Covenant, suspending all commerce with Great Britain, was adopted throughout the continent. One military commander, having openly declared that he would commit the man to jail who should presume to sign it, upward of a hundred persons immediately affixed their signatures. "King George had indeed sowed dragons' teeth, when he attempted to starve the Bostonians into submission."

The tories having failed in all endeavors to purchase peace by payment for the tea, now planned the entire annihilation of the committee of correspondence, which had steadily organized the resistance. Warren's Solemn League and Covenant, which had been already extensively circulated, furnished them with a battle-field. Since town-meetings were the order of the day, the tories saw no reason why they should not have a town-meeting of their own; and a petition was presented to the selectmen, signed by the requisite number of citizens. On the twenty-seventh of June, accordingly, the people assembled in great numbers at Faneuil Hall, willing to listen patiently to the arguments of their enemies. The gathering quickly swelled beyond the capacity of the hall,



—for, now that thousands were thrown out of employment, every public meeting was more than ever thronged,—and the tories shrewdly argued that, with starvation staring the inhabitants in the face, they would be likely to vote for the apparently slight concession of paying for the tea, which would throw open the harbor, and abolish the distress. After Samuel Adams had been selected to preside, the meeting adjourned to the Old South, where the accommodations were more ample. When quiet was restored in the vast assemblage, the Solemn League and Covenant, and a number of letters, were called for by the tories, and accordingly read to the meeting,—whereupon one of the loyalists proposed “that a vote of censure be passed by the town upon the conduct of the committee of correspondence, and that the said committee be annihilated!

Adams immediately left the moderator’s seat, and desired that, if the conduct of that body was to be considered, some other person might be appointed to the chair. Adams was the father and life of the committee; and to him it fell, appropriately, to defend it when attacked. He descended to the floor of the church, and there the subject was discussed,—“the gentlemen in favor of the motion being patiently heard. But, it being dark, and these declaring that they had nothing further to offer, it was voted to defer the consideration thereof to the adjournment.” The debate recommenced at ten o’clock the next morning. The theme was particularly calculated to nerve Adams to the use of all his powers. The arguments brought forward by the loyalists for the occasion, the appeals to the crowds of laboring men and mechanics to ward off the misery which had fallen upon their families, needed to be ably answered. It is deeply to be regretted that only some disconnected fragments of his speech have been preserved. He seems to have illustrated his discourse by anecdotes, as was his wont.

“A Grecian philosopher,” he said, “who was lying asleep upon the grass, was aroused by the bite of some animal upon the palm of his hand. He closed his hand suddenly, as he

awoke, and found that he had caught a field-mouse. As he was examining the little animal who dared to attack him, it unexpectedly bit him a second time. He dropped it, and it made its escape. Now, fellow-citizens, what think you was the reflection he made upon this trifling circumstance? It was this: that there is no animal, however weak and contemptible, which cannot defend its own liberty, if it will only *fight* for it."

Adams then drew a picture of the future greatness of America, as she must one day become under the influx of population from Europe, and by her vast natural resources; and he pointed out a great empire in the west, for the residence of millions yet unborn, — the posterity of those whose privilege it was to prepare the way, by their virtue and courage, for the generations who were to follow.

"An empire is rising in America," he said. "Britain, by her multiplied oppressions, is accelerating that independence which she dreads. We have a post to maintain, — to desert which, would entail upon us the curses of posterity. The virtue of our ancestors inspires us. For my part, I have been wont to converse with Poverty; and however disagreeable a companion she may be thought by the affluent and luxurious, who were never acquainted with her, I can live happily with her the remainder of my days, if I can thereby contribute to the redemption of my country. Our oppressors cannot force us into submission by reducing us to a state of starvation. We can subsist independently of all the world. The real wants and necessities of man are few. Nature has bountifully supplied us with the means of subsistence; and, if all others fail, we can, like our ancestors, subsist on the clams and muscles which abound along our shore."

The town records state that the debate, on this second day, was of long continuance; but, finally, the proposition was put for the annihilation of the committee. Then the assembly vindicated itself, and routed the tory ranks. Annihilate the committee chosen by their own voice, and watching over their common welfare? Patience was at last exhausted;

and the defeated grumblers listened to the indignant vote, —

“That the town bear open testimony that they are abundantly satisfied of the upright intentions, and much approve of the honest zeal of the committee of correspondence, and desire that they will persevere with their usual activity and firmness, continuing steadfast in the way of well-doing.”

The tories left the church discomfited. And so ended the last attempt of the administration party to carry their measures by legal means in Boston.

“The attempt,” says a writer in Rhode Island, a few weeks afterwards, “made by these men to annihilate your committee of correspondence, was very natural. The robber does not wish to see our property entirely secured. An enemy, about to invade a foreign country, does not wish to see the coast well guarded, and the country universally alarmed. These men, knowing that a design was formed to rob the Americans of their property, hoped to share largely in the general plunder; but they now see that, by the vigilance and fidelity of the several committees of correspondence, the people are universally apprised of their danger, and will soon enter into such measures for the common security as will infallibly blast all their unjust expectations.”

The downfall of the committee of correspondence would indeed have betokened the ruin of the patriot cause. On them rested the hope of that union throughout the colonies, which alone could yield success. At the time of the attack thus made upon them in the Old South Meeting-house, the committee seems to have consisted of Samuel Adams, Joseph Warren, William Molineux, William and Joseph Greenleaf, Benjamin Church, Thomas Young, William Powell, Richard Boynton, Nathan Barber, and John Sweetzer. These certainly are the gentlemen who, a few weeks later, unanimously voted, that, notwithstanding the rumors of the intended arrest of some of the members, the committee would continue to perform its duties, “unless prevented by brutal force.”



The efforts of their antagonists had only strengthened the power of the body they threatened to destroy ; and the citizens of Boston went to their homes resolved to suffer patiently the results of isolation, and ready to ask with Adams, Whether, in case the price must be submission, “all the trade in the province, whether consisting of spring or fall importations, would, in the end, be worth an oyster-shell ? ”

## WARREN'S LAST ORATION.

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ONCE more the patriots designed to celebrate the Boston Massacre. The commemoration was a public affront to Gage, both as general of the army, and as governor of the province, — for the subject of the oration was the baleful effect of standing armies in time of peace; and it was to be delivered in a town-meeting, contrary to an act of parliament which he came to Boston to enforce. But little cared the Bostonians for any such restriction. Since town-meetings were only permitted on certain specified occasions, those same town-meetings were simply kept alive indefinitely by adjournment, until the despairing general wrote that, for “aught he could see, one meeting might last ten years.”

British officers had publicly announced that it would be at the cost of any man's life, to speak of the Boston Massacre on this occasion; and Joseph Warren, therefore, solicited for himself the post of danger. The offer was gladly hailed by the popular leaders.

“To-morrow,” wrote Samuel Adams, “an oration is to be delivered by Dr. Warren. It was thought best to have an experienced officer in the political field on this occasion, as we may possibly be attacked in our trenches.” The patriots looked forward to the day with deep interest, and not without apprehension.

As the anniversary, this year, fell on Sunday, the commemoration took place on Monday. Many people came into the town from the country, to take part in it; and there was a “prodigious concourse.” In the morning the citizens, “legally warned by an adjournment of the Port Bill meeting,”

assembled in Faneuil Hall, with Samuel Adams for the moderator, and transacted the usual business relative to the selection of the orator. It was reported that the committee of the Old South Meeting-house were willing it should be used on this occasion; and the town adjourned to meet at half past eleven o'clock in the church. The Old South was crowded. In the pulpit, which was draped with black, were the popular leaders,—Samuel Adams, William Cooper, Hancock, and the selectmen. The moderator, observing several British officers standing in the aisles, left his chair, and requesting the occupants of the front pews to vacate them, courteously invited the strangers to occupy these seats. About forty officers, dressed in their uniforms, immediately filled these pews, and seated themselves upon the pulpit stairs and the platform above. There they sat conspicuously, and listened to a glowing picture of the injury which they were inflicting on the town. They were treated with the most punctilious courtesy. Should any disturbance arise, the moderator was determined the towns-people should have given no excuse. “ALWAYS PUT YOUR ENEMY IN THE WRONG” was the motto of Sam Adams; and his practice accorded with his precept.

The appointed hour arrived; but no orator made his appearance. The audience manifested considerable anxiety. The menaces of the past weeks were recalled, and many anxious eyes were turned towards the door. Suddenly, in the window behind the pulpit, appeared the missing speaker. Prepared for violence, and fearing an affray should he attempt to force an entrance through the crowded aisles, Warren had procured a ladder, and taken his opponents by surprise. The astonished officers on the platform, seeing his coolness and intrepidity, made way for him to pass.

The silence was oppressive. “Each man felt the palpitations of his own heart, and saw the pale, but determined face of his neighbor. Warren and his friends were prepared to chastise contumely, prevent disgrace, and avenge an attempt at assassination.”

Amid "an awful stillness" the orator advanced, and began in a clear, firm tone:—

MY EVER HONORED FELLOW-CITIZENS,—

It is not without the most humiliating conviction of my want of ability that I now appear before you; but the sense I have of the obligation I am under to obey the calls of my country at all times, together with an animating recollection of your indulgence, exhibited upon so many occasions, has induced me once more, undeserving as I am, to throw myself upon that candor which looks with kindness on the feeblest efforts of an honest mind.

You will not now expect the elegance, the learning, the fire, the enrapturing strains of eloquence, which charmed you when a Lovell, a Church, or a Hancock spake; but you will permit me to say, that, with a sincerity equal to theirs, I mourn over my bleeding country. With them I weep at her distress, and with them deeply resent the many injuries she has received from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men.

That personal freedom is the natural right of every man; and that property, or an exclusive right to dispose of what he has honestly acquired by his own labor, necessarily arises therefrom,—are truths which common sense has placed beyond the reach of contradiction. And no man or body of men can, without being guilty of flagrant injustice, claim a right to dispose of the persons or acquisitions of any other man or body of men, unless it can be proved that such a right has arisen from some compact between the parties, in which it has been explicitly and freely granted.

If I may be indulged in taking a retrospective view of the first settlement of our country, it will be easy to determine with what degree of justice the late parliament of Great Britain have assumed the power of giving away that property which the Americans have earned by their labor.

Our fathers, having nobly resolved never to wear the yoke of despotism, and seeing the European world at that time through indolence and cowardice falling a prey to tyranny, bravely threw themselves upon the bosom of the ocean, determined to find a place in which they might enjoy their freedom or perish in the glorious attempt. Approving Heaven beheld the favorite ark dancing upon the waves, and graciously preserved it until the chosen families were brought in safety to these western regions. They found the land swarming with savages, who threatened death with every kind of torture. But savages and death with torture were far less terrible than slavery. Nothing was so much the object of their abhorrence as a tyrant's power. They knew that it was more safe to dwell with man in his most unpolished state, than in a country

where arbitrary power prevails. Even anarchy itself, that bugbear held up by the tools of power (though truly to be deprecated), is infinitely less dangerous to mankind than arbitrary government. Anarchy can be but of short duration; for when men are at liberty to pursue that course which is most conducive to their own happiness, they will soon come into it, and from the rudest state of nature, order and good government must soon arise. But tyranny, when once established, entails its curses on a nation to the latest period of time, unless some daring genius, inspired by Heaven shall, unappalled by danger, bravely form and execute the arduous design of restoring liberty and life to his enslaved, murdered country.

The tools of power, in every age, have racked their inventions to justify the few in sporting with the happiness of the many; and having found their sophistry too weak to hold mankind in bondage, have impiously dared to force religion, the daughter of the king of heaven, to become a prostitute in the service of hell. They taught that princes, honored with the name of Christian, might bid defiance to the founder of their faith, might pillage pagan countries and deluge them with blood, only because they boasted themselves to be the disciples of that Teacher who strictly charged his followers to do to others as they would that others should do unto them.

This country, having been discovered by an English subject, in the year 1620, was (according to the system which the blind superstition of those times supported) deemed the property of the crown of England. Our ancestors, when they resolved to quit their native soil, obtained from King James a grant of certain lands in North America. This they probably did to silence the cavils of their enemies; for it cannot be doubted but they despised the pretended right which he claimed thereto. Certain it is that he might, with equal propriety and justice, have made them a grant of the planet Jupiter. And their subsequent conduct plainly shows, that they were too well acquainted with humanity and the principles of natural equity to suppose that the grant gave them any right to take possession. They therefore entered into a treaty with the natives, and bought from them the lands. Nor have I ever yet obtained any information that our ancestors ever pleaded, or that the natives ever regarded the grant from the English crown. The business was transacted by the parties in the same independent manner that it would have been, had neither of them ever known or heard of the island of Great Britain.

Having become the honest proprietors of the soil, they immediately applied themselves to the cultivation of it; and they soon beheld the virgin earth teeming with richest fruits, a grateful recompense for their unwearied toil. The fields began to wave with ripening harvests, and the late barren wilderness was seen to blossom like the rose. The savage natives saw with wonder the delightful change, and quickly formed the



scheme to obtain that, by fraud or force, which nature meant as the reward of industry alone. But the illustrious emigrants soon convinced the rude invaders that they were not less ready to take the field for battle than for labor; and the insidious foe was driven from their borders as often as he ventured to disturb them. The crown of England looked with indifference on the contest. Our ancestors were left alone to combat with the natives. Nor is there any reason to believe that it ever was intended by the one party or expected by the other, that the grantor should defend and maintain the grantees in the peaceable possession of the lands named in the patents. And it appears plainly, from the history of those times, that neither the prince nor the people of England thought themselves much interested in the matter. They had not then any idea of a thousandth part of those advantages which they since have, and we are most heartily willing they should still continue to reap from us.

But when, at an infinite expense of toil and blood, this widely extended continent had been cultivated and defended, when the hardy adventurers justly expected that they and their descendants should peaceably have enjoyed the harvest of those fields which they had sown, and the fruit of those vineyards which they had planted, this country was then thought worthy the attention of the British ministry; and the only justifiable and only successful means of rendering the colonies serviceable to Britain were adopted. By an intercourse of friendly offices, the two countries became so united in affection, that they thought not of any distinct or separate interests,—they found both countries flourishing and happy. Britain saw her commerce extended and her wealth increased, her lands raised to an immense value, her fleets riding triumphant on the ocean, the terror of her arms spreading to every quarter of the globe. The colonist found himself free, and thought himself secure. He dwelt under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, and had none to make him afraid. He knew, indeed, that by purchasing the manufactures of Great Britain, he contributed to its greatness: he knew that all the wealth that his labor produced centred in Great Britain. But that, far from exciting his envy, filled him with the highest pleasure: that thought supported him in all his toils. When the business of the day was past, he solaced himself with the contemplation, or perhaps entertained his listening family with the recital, of some great, some glorious transaction which shines conspicuous in the history of Britain; or perhaps his elevated fancy led him to foretell, with a kind of enthusiastic confidence, the glory, power, and duration of an empire which should extend from one end of the earth to the other. He saw (or thought he saw) the British nation risen to a pitch of grandeur which cast a veil over the Roman glory, and ravished with the præview, boasted a race of British kings whose names should echo through those realms where Cyrus, Alexander, and the Cæsars were unknown,—princes for whom millions of grateful subjects,



redeemed from slavery and pagan ignorance, should with thankful tongues offer up their prayers and praises to that transcendently great and beneficent Being by whom kings reign and princes decree justice.

These pleasing connections might have continued; these delightful prospects might have been every day extended; and even the reveries of the most warm imagination might have been realized. But unhappily for us, unhappily for Britain, the madness of an avaricious minister of state has drawn a sable curtain over the charming scene, and in its stead has brought upon the stage discord, envy, hatred, and revenge, with civil war close in their rear.

Some demon, in an evil hour, suggested to a short-sighted financier, the hateful project of transferring the whole property of the king's subjects in America to his subjects in Britain. The claim of the British parliament to tax the colonies, can never be supported but by such a *transfer*; for the right of the House of Commons of Great Britain to originate any tax, or grant money, is altogether derived from their being elected by the people of Great Britain to act for them. And the people of Great Britain cannot confer on their representatives a right to give or grant anything which they themselves have not a right to give or grant personally. Therefore it follows, that, if the members chosen by the people of Great Britain to represent them in parliament have, by virtue of their being so chosen, any right to give or grant American property, or to lay any tax upon the lands or persons of the colonists, it is because the lands and people in the colonies are *bona fide*, owned by, and justly belonging to, the people of Great Britain. But (as has been before observed) every man has a right to personal freedom, consequently a right to enjoy what is acquired by his own labor. And as it is evident that the property in this country has been acquired by our own labor, it is the duty of the people of Great Britain to produce some compact in which we have explicitly given up to them a right to dispose of our persons or property. Until this is done, every attempt of theirs, or of those whom they have deputed to act for them, to give or grant any part of our property, is directly repugnant to every principle of reason and natural justice. But I may boldly say, that such a compact never existed — no, not even in imagination. Nevertheless, the representatives of a nation long famed for justice and the exercise of every noble virtue have been prevailed on to adopt the fatal scheme. And although the dreadful consequences of this wicked policy have already shaken the empire to its centre, yet still it is persisted in. Regardless of the voice of reason, deaf to the prayers and supplications, and unaffected with the flowing tears of suffering millions, the British ministry still hug the darling idol. And every rolling year affords fresh instances of the absurd devotion with which they worship it. Alas! how has the folly, the distraction of the British councils, blasted our swelling hopes and spread a gloom over this western hemisphere!

The hearts of Britons and Americans, which lately felt the generous glow of mutual confidence and love, now burn with jealousy and rage. Though but of yesterday, I recollect (deeply affected at the ill-boding change) the happy hours that past whilst Britain and America rejoiced in the prosperity and greatness of each other. Heaven grant those halcyon days may soon return! But now, the Briton too often looks on the American with an envious eye, — taught to consider his just plea for the enjoyment of his earnings, as the effect of pride and stubborn opposition to the parent country, — whilst the American beholds the Briton as the ruffian, ready first to take away his property, and next (what is still dearer to every virtuous man) the liberty of his country.

When the measures of administration had disgusted the colonies to the highest degree, and the people of Great Britain had, by artifice and falsehood, been irritated against America, an army was sent over to enforce submission to certain acts of the British parliament, which reason scorned to countenance, and which placemen and pensioners were found unable to support.

Martial law and the government of a well-regulated city are so entirely different, that it has always been considered as improper to quarter troops in populous cities. Frequent disputes must necessarily arise between the citizen and the soldier, even if no previous animosities subsist. And it is further certain, from a consideration of the nature of mankind, as well as from constant experience, that standing armies always endanger the liberty of the subject. But when the people, on the one part, considered the army as sent to enslave them, and the army, on the other, were taught to look on the people as in a state of rebellion, it was but just to fear the most disagreeable consequences. Our fears, we have seen, were but too well grounded.

The many injuries offered to the town, I pass over in silence. I cannot now mark out the path which led to that unequalled scene of horror, the sad remembrance of which takes the full possession of my soul. The sanguinary theatre again opens itself to view. The baleful images of terror crowd around me; and discontented ghosts, with hollow groans, appear to solemnize the anniversary of the *fifth of March*.

Approach we then the melancholy walk of death. Hither let me call the gay companion, — here let him drop a farewell tear upon that body which so late he saw vigorous and warm with social mirth. Hither let me lead the tender mother to weep over her beloved son. Come, widowed mourner, — here satiate thy grief. Behold thy murdered husband gasping on the ground; and, to complete the pompous show of wretchedness, bring in each hand thy infant children to bewail their father's fate. Take heed, ye orphan babes, lest whilst your streaming eyes are fixed upon the ghastly corpse, your feet slide on the stones bespattered with your father's

brains.\* Enough! This tragedy need not be heightened by an infant weltering in the blood of him that gave it birth. Nature, reluctant, shrinks already from the view; and the chilled blood rolls slowly backward to its fountain. We wildly stare about, and with amazement ask, Who spread this ruin round us? What wretch has dared deface the image of his God? Has haughty France, or cruel Spain, sent forth her myrmidons? Has the grim savage rushed again from the far distant wilderness? Or does some fiend, fierce from the depth of hell, with all the rancorous malice which the apostate damned can feel, twang her destructive bow, and hurl her deadly arrows at our breast? No: none of these. But, how astonishing! it is the hand of Britain that inflicts the wound. The arms of George, our rightful king, have been employed to shed that blood which freely would have flowed when justice, or the honor of his crown, had called his subjects to the field.

But pity, grief, astonishment, with all the softer movements of the soul, must now give way to stronger passions. Say, fellow-citizens, what dreadful thought now swells your heaving bosoms? You fly to arms! Sharp indignation flashes from each eye; revenge gnashes her iron teeth; death grins an hideous smile (secure to drench his greedy jaws in human gore); whilst hovering furies darken all the air.

But stop, my bold, adventurous countrymen: stain not your weapons with the blood of Britons. Attend to reason's voice. Humanity puts in her claim, and sues to be again admitted to her wonted seat,—the bosom of the brave. Revenge is far beneath the noble mind. Many, perhaps, compelled to rank among the vile assassins, do, from their inmost souls, detest the barbarous action. The winged death, shot from your arms, may chance to pierce some breast that bleeds already for your injured country.

The storm subsides. A solemn pause ensues. You spare, upon condition they depart. They go: they quit your city. They no more shall give offence. Thus closes the important drama.

And could it have been conceived that we again should have seen a British army in our land, sent to enforce obedience to acts of parliament destructive of our liberty? But the royal ear, far distant from this western world, has been assaulted by the tongue of slander; and villains, traitorous alike to king and country, have prevailed upon a gracious prince to clothe his countenance with wrath, and to erect the hostile banner against a people ever affectionate and loyal to him and his illustrious predecessors of the house of Hanover. Our streets are again filled with armed men: our harbor is crowded with ships of war. But these cannot intimidate us. Our liberty must be preserved. It is far dearer than life.

\* After Mr. Gray had been shot through the body, and had fallen dead on the ground, a bayonet was pushed through his skull. Part of the bone being broken, his brains fell out upon the pavement.

We hold it even dear as our allegiance. We must defend it against the attacks of friends as well as enemies. We cannot suffer even Britons to ravish it from us.

No longer could we reflect, with generous pride, on the heroic actions of our American forefathers, — no longer boast our origin from that far-famed island whose warlike sons have so often drawn their well-tried swords to save her from the ravages of tyranny, — could we, but for a moment, entertain the thought of giving up our liberty. The man who meanly will submit to wear a shackle, contemns the noblest gift of Heaven, and impiously affronts the God that made him free.

It was a maxim of the Roman people, which eminently conduced to the greatness of that state, never to despair of the commonwealth. The maxim may prove as salutary to us now, as it did to them. Short-sighted mortals see not the numerous links of small and great events which form the chain on which the fate of kings and nations is suspended. Ease and prosperity (though pleasing for a day) have often sunk a people into effeminacy and sloth. Hardships and dangers (though we forever strive to shun them) have frequently called forth such virtues as have commanded the applause and reverence of an admiring world. Our country loudly calls you to be circumspect, vigilant, active, and brave. Perhaps — all gracious Heaven avert it! — perhaps the power of Britain, a nation great in war, by some malignant influence may be employed to enslave you. But let not even this discourage you. Her arms, it is true, have filled the world with terror. Her troops have reaped the laurels of the field. Her fleets have rode triumphant on the sea. And when or where did you, my countrymen, depart inglorious from the field of fight? You, too, can show the trophies of your forefathers' victories and your own, — can name the fortresses and battles you have won. And many of you count the honorable scars or wounds received whilst fighting for your king and country.

Where justice is the standard, Heaven is the warrior's shield. But conscious guilt unnerves the arm that lifts the sword against the innocent. Britain, united with these colonies by commerce and affection, by interest and blood, may mock the threats of France and Spain, — may be the seat of universal empire. But should America, either by force, or those more dangerous engines luxury and corruption, ever be brought into a state of vassalage, Britain must lose her freedom also. No longer shall she sit the empress of the sea. Her ships no more shall waft her thunders over the wide ocean. The wreath shall wither on her temples. Her weakened arm shall be unable to defend her coasts; and she, at last, must bow her venerable head to some proud foreigner's despotic rule.

But if, from past events, we may venture to form a judgment of the future, we justly may expect that the devices of our enemies will but increase the triumphs of our country. I must indulge a hope that Britain's



liberty, as well as ours, will eventually be preserved by the virtue of America.

The attempt of the British parliament to raise a revenue from America, and our denial of their right to do it, have excited an almost universal inquiry into the rights of mankind in general, and of British subjects in particular, — the necessary result of which must be such a liberality of sentiment, and such a jealousy of those in power, as will, better than an adamantine wall, secure us against the future approaches of despotism.

The malice of the Boston Port Bill has been defeated in a very considerable degree, by giving you an opportunity of deserving, and our brethren in this and our sister colonies an opportunity of bestowing, those benefactions which have delighted your friends and astonished your enemies, not only in America but in Europe also. And what is more valuable still, the sympathetic feelings for a brother in distress, and the grateful emotions excited in the breast of him who finds relief, must for ever endear each to the other, and form those indissoluble bonds of friendship and affection on which the preservation of our rights so evidently depends.

The mutilation of our charter has made every other colony jealous for its own; for this, if once submitted to by us, would set on float the property and government of every British settlement upon the continent. If charters are not deemed sacred, how miserably precarious is everything founded upon them!

Even the sending troops to put these acts in execution, is not without advantages to us. The exactness and beauty of their discipline inspire our youth with ardor in the pursuit of military knowledge. Charles the Invincible, taught Peter the Great the art of war. The battle of Pultowa convinced Charles of the proficiency Peter had made.

Our country is in danger, but not to be despaired of. Our enemies are numerous and powerful. But we have many friends determining to be free; and heaven and earth will aid the resolution. On you depend the fortunes of America. You are to decide the important question on which rest the happiness and liberty of millions yet unborn. Act worthy of yourselves. The faltering tongue of hoary age calls on you to support your country. The lisping infant raises its suppliant hands, imploring defence against the monster slavery. Your fathers look from their celestial seats with smiling approbation on their sons, who boldly stand forth in the cause of virtue, but sternly frown upon the inhuman miscreant, who, to secure the loaves and fishes to himself, would breed a serpent to destroy his children.

But pardon me, my fellow-citizens, I know you want not zeal or fortitude. You will maintain your rights or perish in the generous struggle. However difficult the combat, you never will decline it when freedom is the prize. An independence of Great Britain is not our aim. No: our

wish is, that Britain and the colonies may, like the oak and ivy, grow and increase in strength together. But whilst the infatuated plan of making one part of the empire slaves to the other is persisted in, the interest and safety of Britain, as well as the colonies, require that the wise measures recommended by the honorable the continental congress be steadily pursued, — whereby the unnatural contest between a parent honored and a child beloved may probably be brought to such an issue as that the peace and happiness of both may be established upon a lasting basis. But if these pacific measures are ineffectual, and it appears that the only way to safety is through fields of blood, I know you will not turn your faces from your foes, but will, undauntedly, press forward, until tyranny is trodden under foot, and you have fixed your adored goddess Liberty fast by a Brunswick's side on the American throne.

You then, who nobly have espoused your country's cause; who generously have sacrificed wealth and ease; who have despised the pomp and show of tinselled greatness; refused the summons to the festive board; been deaf to the alluring calls of luxury and mirth; who have forsaken the downy pillow to keep your vigils by the midnight lamp for the salvation of your invaded country, that you might break the fowler's snare and disappoint the vulture of his prey, — you then will reap that harvest of renown which you so justly have deserved. Your country shall pay her grateful tribute of applause. Even the children of your most inveterate enemies, ashamed to tell from whom they sprang, while they in secret curse their stupid, cruel parents, shall join the general voice of gratitude to those who broke the fetters which their fathers forged.

Having redeemed your country, and secured the blessing to future generations (who, fired by your example, shall emulate your virtues and learn from you the heavenly art of making millions happy), with heart-felt joy, with transports all your own, you cry, "The glorious work is done!" then drop the mantle to some young Elisha, and take your seats with kindred spirits in your native skies.

Though some of the officers groaned when the audience applauded, yet they were generally quiet until the close of the oration. One of them, seated on the pulpit stairs, attempted to intimidate Warren by holding up one of his hands with several pistol bullets in the open palm; but the orator, without discontinuing his discourse, dropped on them a white handkerchief. The Forty-seventh regiment, returning from parade, passed the Old South; and Col. Nesbitt, the commander, caused the drums to beat, in hopes of drowning the orator's voice. Every move on the part of the royal troops



and of the populace, showed that each was awaiting the action of the other for the commencement of bloodshed. But the people were governed implicitly by the advice of their leaders, and were still faithful to the watchword of their captain. They "*always put their enemy in the wrong.*"

On this occasion, there can be little doubt that high hopes were entertained of some successful interference; and the absolute refusal of the people to be forced to take the initiative was, doubtless, a disappointment, although one writer attributes the failure to a slighter cause.

"The officers of the army," he says, "being highly incensed by the inhabitants of Boston from many insults which had been offered them, and exasperated by the many inflammatory preachings and orations delivered from the pulpit, resolved privately to take an opportunity to seize the promoters of these discourses,—the principal of which were Adams, Hancock, and Dr. Warren. The scheme was laid; and the young man fixed upon to carry it into execution was an ensign in the army, who was to give the signal to the rest by throwing an egg at Dr. Warren in the pulpit. However, the scheme was rendered abortive in the most whimsical manner; for he who was deputed to throw the egg, fell in going to the church, dislocated his knee, and broke the egg."

Doubtless, the patriots of that day would have looked on the accident as more than whimsical. It might have ranked in the records of the Old South with that other special providence, in 1746, when the French fleet, under the Duke D'Anville (destined for the destruction of New England), was wrecked off Nova Scotia, on the day of solemn fasting and prayer appointed for that emergency, and when Mr. Prince was praying most fervently that a sudden wind which rattled against the window-panes might "frustrate the objects of our enemies, and save the land from conquest and popery."

But despite the happy accident which befell the egg, the meeting did not close in perfect order. At the conclusion of

the oration, when it was moved that an orator should be appointed for the ensuing year, on the anniversary of the horrid massacre, an officer standing in the aisle towards the Milk-street door, turned on his heel crying, "Fie, fie!" Great disturbance ensued, some taking it for an alarm, others for a command to the soldiers to fire; but the town clerk (who sat under the pulpit), with his mallet speedily commanded attention, and the audience was quieted by Samuel Adams, who assured them that there was "*no fire but that of liberty, which was burning in their bosoms.*"

"The assembly," said Adams, "was irritated to the greatest degree, and confusion ensued. The officers, however, did not gain their end, which was apparently to break up the meeting; for order was soon restored, and we proceeded regularly and finished the business. It was provoking enough to the whole corps, that, while there were so many troops stationed here with the design of suppressing town-meetings, there should yet be one for the purpose of delivering an oration to commemorate a massacre perpetrated by soldiers, and to show the danger of standing armies."

"The scene was sublime," said Samuel L. Knapp. "There was in this appeal to Britain, in this description of suffering, dying, and horror, a calm and high-souled defiance which must have chilled the blood of every sensible foe. Such another hour has seldom happened in the history of man, and is not surpassed in the records of nations. The thunders of Demosthenes rolled at a distance from Philip and his host; and Tully poured the fiercest torrent of invective when Cataline was at a distance, and his dagger no longer to be feared. But Warren's speech was made to proud oppressors resting on their arms, whose errand it was to overawe and whose business it was to fight. If the deed of Brutus deserved to be commemorated by history, poetry, painting, and sculpture, should not this instance of patriotism and bravery be held in lasting remembrance? If he —

"That struck the foremost man of all this world' —

was hailed as first of freemen, what honors are not due to him who undismayed bearded the British lion, to show the world what his country dared to do in the cause of liberty? If the statue of Brutus was placed among the gods who were the preservers of Roman freedom, should not that of Warren fill a lofty niche in the temple reared to perpetuate the remembrance of our birth as a nation?"

## THE DESECRATION OF THE CHURCH.

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SIX weeks after the memorable gathering in the Old South Church, the smouldering flames broke forth. Adams and his followers were successful. The colonists were not the first aggressors. They had "put their enemies in the wrong." The attempt to seize the provincial stores at Concord, roused the continent to armed resistance; but, as before, Boston was still the greatest sufferer.

The fate of the Old South Church during the siege of Boston needs scarcely to be retold. It is recorded on the building itself, where all who pass can read. The British troops had, from the outset, displayed a strong propensity to irritate and shock the religious feelings of the community. Even before the siege, loud complaints had been made of the habit of playing secular tunes during the hours of religious service, and the band had given especial offence by sounding "Yankee Doodle" as the towns-people plodded their sober way to church. Scarcely had hostilities commenced, when a new outrage to the feelings of the community was perpetrated. The Old South Meeting-house, which had so long re-echoed with the words of the most saintly of the colonists, and which was endeared to every citizen within the town, must fall the victim. It was, doubtless, great satisfaction to the British troops who had so lately been held up to open contempt within these sacred walls, to find the sanctuary of their condemners at length within their grasp. Pews and pulpit were removed and burnt, about a foot of earth and gravel was spread upon the floor, and the building turned into a riding-school. A leaping-bar, ten feet long and four

feet high, was put up for practice, from the first window west from the Milk-street door. The eastern gallery was reserved for spectators of the feats of horsemanship, while refreshments were provided in the gallery below.

That it was not the necessities of war which prompted this desecration, was sufficiently established by the manner in which the mutilations were accomplished. The beautiful carved pew of Deacon Hubbard was selected for a pre-eminence in ignominy, which might equal the owner's prominence among his fellow-worshippers. With all its silken hangings, it was carried off by a British officer and converted into a pig-sty. Some valuable books and manuscripts, belonging to the library of Dr. Prince, are said to have been burnt; and the parsonage house, the old original mansion of Gov. Winthrop, was destroyed. The sycamore-trees perished likewise, which had always skirted the grass-plot in front. The occupation of the Old South was at the instance of Sir John Burgoyne; and it was his regiment of the Queen's Light Dragoons which completed the mutilation.

The indignation of the towns-people must have been extreme; and one good old woman, in especial, who frequently passed the church, was in the habit of stopping at the door, and with loud lamentations, amid the hootings of the soldiery, bewailing "the desolation of the house of prayer." She denounced on the scornful soldiers the vengeance of Heaven; and in her wrath she threatened that good old Dr. Sewall himself would rise from his grave, and carry off those who thus dishonored his church. One night, as a Scotch sentinel was keeping guard, the spectre she had evoked appeared, to fulfil its mission. The horror-stricken soldier screamed in agony, and his cries awoke the guard at the Province House across the way. No ghost was seen by the new comers; but the terrified Scotchman was frightened beyond recovery. There was no pacifying him until some one asked how the doctor was dressed, and it was discovered that the spectre had appeared with a large wig and gown. Fortunately for the sentinel's future night-watches, one of the towns-people was



able to assure him that the apparition could not have been the doctor, as he never had worn a wig; and this restored the poor fellow to his senses. It was supposed to have been a trick of a comrade, who wished to frighten a superstitious Scotchman, and for that purpose dressed himself in the clerical robes of the Rev. Mr. Cooke of Metonomy, which he had plundered on his retreat at the battle of Lexington.

Once more the anniversary of the Boston Massacre approached; and the church in which the day had been so often commemorated was in its direst desolation. The sound of hurrying hoofs had replaced the scathing words of Warren; and British soldiers panted to revenge their humiliation of the previous year, by feats of daring horsemanship. But the morning sun taught them a different lesson. The patriots who could not commemorate their accustomed day within the walls of their ancient temple, had chosen another celebration. At dawn, the bristling heights of Dorchester commanded the town, and compelled the bewildered soldiery to evacuate it. There was little thought of horsemanship or revelry in the Old South Church upon that fifth of March.

When, a fortnight later, Washington entered the rescued town, his earliest pilgrimage was to the Old South Church. There, standing in the eastern gallery, he looked sadly down on all the wreck below, and reverently said that it was "strange that the British, who so venerated their own churches, should thus have desecrated ours."

Scarcely a century has passed away, and yet these walls have witnessed a stranger desecration than any occupation by foreign troops. But not until our prosperous days did it suffer its sad disgrace. When, in 1861, the rebel guns fired upon the flag at Sumpter and roused the sleeping land,—where was it but in the Old South Church that Boston raised those stars and stripes to highest honor? Ready indeed were its possessors then to claim its proud pre-eminence. Listen

to the words of its pastor and standing committee on that day :—

“In this sad crisis in our nation’s history, when treason and rebellion are abroad in our land, it has occurred to all of us connected with this society, that the banner of our fathers should float from this renowned building. Where better than on this consecrated spot should the national emblem be displayed? In the dark and stormy times of our revolutionary history, it was within the consecrated walls of this Old South Church that our patriotic fathers were accustomed to assemble and take counsel together. Here Warren and Hancock and the Adamses, and their associates, met and poured out their indignant protest against British oppression. Here, within a few feet of where we stand, Benjamin Franklin was born. Let us then, in memory of the past and in hope and faith in the future, but above all relying upon the favor of Heaven, reverently throw our national flag to the breeze, and invoke upon it the blessing of almighty God! . . .

“And as it is befitting that Christianity should embrace the American ensign to-day, so it seems hardly less proper that the Old South, of all the churches in New England, should be delegated for this touching ceremony. She is not the oldest, but certainly the most historic of them all. The history of the nation cannot be separated from hers,—the two are inseparably intertwined. Within a few yards of us, John Winthrop lived and died; and his mansion was occupied by ministers of this church until destroyed during the war of the Revolution. From his family, these grounds passed into the possession of John Norton, the celebrated divine; and by him they were given to the church, for the twofold object of civil and religious liberty.

“The State House and this sanctuary have been called the Moses and Aaron of New-England freemen. Here the citizens of Boston, after the tragedy of March 5, 1770, met to denounce standing armies, and to demand the removal of the English troops,—a meeting which grew to be an annual custom, under the direction of the selectmen, and which was really the origin of our present municipal observance of the Fourth of July. Echoes of the eloquence of Samuel Adams, Otis, and Hancock, sleep within these walls,—eloquence which gave birth to the American republic, and which seems to be blossoming out and rousing us as it did our fathers, in the starry folds now floating overhead.

“Hither Warren came, and climbed in through *that* window into the pulpit, on that memorable day when no other citizen dared address the people,—when none but those who loved liberty more than life ventured to be his auditors,—while the king’s troops, fully armed, thronged the aisles and pulpit steps. This building has served as an exercise-ground for horsemen, who sought to conquer the immortal emblem above us.

The horse and his rider have perished, while the temple they profaned still stands, and the flag they hated still waves on high !

“The sanctuary which gave its sacred waters to the brow of Franklin, this day dedicates and baptizes, in the name of the triune God, the symbol which that matchless diplomatist lured from the unwilling hands of kings, and which he taught the nations to fear and to admire. We welcome thee back to thy natal spot, — to the Puritan church where thou wert born, — flag of the free !”

## THE LAST OF THE TOWN-MEETINGS.

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THE story of the present crisis is yet unwritten, — perchance it may ever remain so, — but men still tremble at the danger so narrowly averted. The people of to-day will not speedily forget the perils they have witnessed, or the hair-breadth nature of the escape.

When, in the great Boston fire, the flames flared up around the ancient walls, our firemen labored like heroes. “We must save the Old South!” was the cry, as they charged where the burning tide was fiercest. And the Old South stood; her steeple still towered high above the blackened ruins; and while Boston mourned her stately piles laid low, one voice of glad thanksgiving arose throughout the land.

Little we knew the future. That very month, the guardians of that hallowed spot were bartering their birthright. Those sacred walls which, a dozen years before, they had deemed of priceless value, they now are anxious to resign, — and to resign for any purpose, however unbecoming. It was for a postoffice that they delivered up the church, and themselves emulated the desecration whose record they had inscribed upon their walls in holy horror.

Of them and of their course we can be silent. Their desertion might have been forgiven; their motives might even have been respected; and their verdict has been written by themselves. When Boston shall have redeemed her birthright, she will remember that their aid alone is absent, their hands alone have hindered where they might have helped. *They have had their opportunity, and they have lost it!* We can leave the rest to time.

Yet in justice to our native city, let it not be forgotten that the desertion was not unanimous. Nearly half the society voted most resolutely against the lease, and for two years contended for the preservation of the church before the legislature and in the courts. Within five weeks after the power was given, the last dishonor was suffered. The Old South Meeting-house was advertised for sale as bricks and mortar, and for thirteen hundred and fifty dollars, knocked off to the highest bidder!

The indignation of the town broke forth, now the last hour was come. Possession for seven days was purchased, the Old Church was dressed with flags, and an hour appointed for one last struggle to preserve its honored walls. The church was crowded to overflowing; and the affection of the town for her old rallying-ground was settled beyond dispute. The committee appointed by their fellow-citizens undertook the sacred charge. Under many difficulties, they have been at last so far successful as to place it in friendly hands, where it is held until the public can redeem it.

Those who deemed the task Quixotic, and predicted failure for the attempt, had forgotten the lesson taught of old to Hutchinson and Gage, — that a *Boston town-meeting* always means to compass what it undertakes whenever it assembles in the *Old South Church*.



















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